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ECCLESIA  
OR, THE CHURCH  
OF CHRIST



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# ECCLESIA:

## The Church of Christ

*A Planned Series of Papers by*

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"A glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any  
such thing"—*Ephes. v, 27*

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## THE PREFACE

**I**N arranging this volume my desire has been to provide a concise and simple explanation of what Catholics understand by "the Notes" of the Christian Church. To the Reverend Fathers who have kindly contributed articles, written independently one of the other, I desire to express my thanks.

The reader will do well to bear in mind that our Lord founded His visible Church and that it had become recognized, widespread and numerically powerful before any portion of the New Testament was written. The divine religion, inaugurated and provided with various marks and prerogatives by Christ, had no need of any books as sources of knowledge or doctrine, since it was endowed with the full deposit of revelation by our Lord from the beginning, together with safeguards divinely appointed for the preservation and transmission of that revelation to the human race for all time.

The earliest of the Gospels was not written until thirty or more years had elapsed after the Ascension. The Primitive Church was, consequently, without sacred books. Instead of deriving her teaching from the sacred writings the Church began her mission before they existed, and consequently the authors of the New Testament Scriptures derived much of their knowledge of the teaching and life of our Lord from the Church. The Holy Scriptures, instead of being the source or

rule of faith, are, to Catholics at any rate, a record of the teaching of the Church in the first ages, a record confirmatory and corroborative of the faith, but one which was never intended to supplant the divine authority of the living voice of the Church.

Nothing is more clearly indicated throughout the New Testament than the divine and indefectible character of the visible *Ecclesia* instituted by Christ and designed by Him to be the ark of salvation for, and the oracle of, His revelation to, mankind.

Whereas Protestantism, in all its varying forms, professes to be based upon Scripture, and to be absolutely dependent upon it, Catholicism proclaims the eternal infallibility of the Church, independently of any book, by virtue of the abiding presence within her of the Spirit of Truth, her voice being, in all authoritative utterances, the very voice of her Divine Author Himself. Before the New Testament existed, before its inspired books were collected together, before they were translated from the languages in which they were originally written, long before the copies of the New Testament had been multiplied by the laborious process of transcription, ages before the invention of the art of printing, the Catholic Church was here, preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel, offering up the adorable Sacrifice of the New Law "in every place," administering the sacraments and making disciples of all nations. What she did in her earliest days she has ever since continued to do in the same way, and she will not have completed her task until the end of all things is reached. Sects may come and sects may go, but the Church is



eternal because she is divine, and consequently one and indivisible, holy, Catholic both in time and extent, apostolic and Petrine—that is papal. Not only does the Church instituted by Christ possess all these distinguishing marks or notes, but so conspicuous are they that she can be recognized at a glance as the only institution upon earth possessing these visible indications of her divine origin and character.

A. H. MATHEW

*Chelsfield, Kent*



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By DOM GILBERT DOLAN, O.S.B.

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THE method of parables. The novelty, charm and permanent efficacy of this method of teaching. In mastering hidden meaning of parables we must be guided by the tradition handed down in the Apostolic Church; for "apart He explained all things to His disciples." The parable sometimes continued in a miracle wrought directly after the "sacramental meaning" of words and actions. Range of subjects laid under contribution. Range of spiritual lessons thus taught. Parables dealing with the foundation and growth of the Church. Its nature conveyed by parable of the *house built on the rock*. The tower, the work of the wise householder who reckoned the charges beforehand. The inevitable conflict of the Church figured by the winds and the floods, or "the gates of hell." The certainty of final triumph. The *leaven* in the three measures of meal figures Christ's teaching conveyed by a handful of men to the three great races of mankind. That leaven represents doctrine here is shown by His warning against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. History of Catholic Church being one of silent progress shows aptness of this parable. The similitude of the *salt*. The *mustard-seed* figures the humble origin of the Church, and the mustard tree its development. The continued presence of Christ, the soul of the Church. Position of tree, or Church, varies with age and country. Free intercourse between head and members essential to healthy growth. Liberty from State interference. The *birds of the air*. Humblest and highest shelter within the Church. All arts and sciences derive new life from her. The *vine*. Union of the branches with the vine realized in Christ's sacramental presence with the Church. The *vineyard* into which labourers are invited is the Church. The vineyard to which the Son was sent and from which He was cast out was the



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UNITY has two senses. First, as formally excluding any other Church; secondly, as itself undivided in faith, morals, etc. "Holy Church" in the oldest version of the Creed; then "holy Catholic"; then, circ. 350 A.D., "one, holy, Catholic Church."

Unity as a note of the Church is set forth in Christ's prayer for the Apostles and their converts. Invisible and visible union between the head and members. Hence the distinction between the body and soul of the Church. Baptism of itself constitutes membership of the body. To the soul belong those in a state of grace. Baptism is a visible, grace an invisible bond of unity. Many may belong to the soul of the Church only. But advantage must not be taken of this to remain external to the visible body; nor can we dispense without danger with the means of grace.

Unity being *moral conformity in essentials*, neither the existence of local churches nor doctrinal controversy and development within

the Church impair it. Unity exhibited in the conduct of disputes such as that about the operation of grace or the Chinese practices. Both sides court the judgement of the Holy See, which does not always pronounce. The Church gives freedom of thought on matters not covered by dogmatic definition. The Church has never closed the study of Holy Scripture.

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## VI—THE IDEA OF INFALLIBILITY

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THE life of the Christian rests upon and embodies the three theological virtues. Each of these virtues depends upon certainty as to these objects. Difficulties may be associated with faith, but doubt cannot co-exist with it. Faith is an absolute assurance of certain truths; but these need not be capable of scientific demonstration. Faith is equivalent to certainty.

Truths are natural and supernatural. The latter may be discovered by reason, but when witnessed to by a superior reason are agreeable to reason. By reason we come into contact immediately with natural phenomena: by faith mediately with spiritual phenomena, i.e., we believe what another mind perceives. Faith implies infallibility in that other mind.

In depending on God all Christians depend upon objective infallibility, whether of Bible only, or Bible and Tradition, or Bible and Tradition and Living Voice; but in each case upon an unerring mind. The idea of inerrancy not peculiar to Catholicism. The existence of an organ of infallibility a matter of history. Error the retention of untruth in place of truth. That which prevents error produces infallibility.

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Dr Salmon's contention that the Church in practice distrusts her own claim to infallibility by using it very rarely and then only by institutional means for the definition of dogma answered by analogies from the general working of the divine economy. Infallibility exists not only to be used on the rare occasions when it is necessary to define a doctrine, but is in operation daily in the implicit and con-

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*Schism*

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By the REV. SPENCER JONES, M.A. OXON, RECTOR  
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**P**ROOFS from original historical documents that a Church of England, not in conscious dependence on the Holy See in Spirituals, is a phenomenon unknown to history until the reign of Henry VIII.

# ECCLESIA

## Or, The Church of Christ

### CHAPTER I

#### The Church in the Parables

**N**O form of teaching could be more striking or better adapted for its purpose than that of which our Lord made use during the days of His earthly ministry. It at once attracted the attention of His contemporaries by its novelty and charm ; while of its very nature it is as fresh and suggestive to-day as it was nineteen hundred years ago. Now, as then, men dearly love a story ; and a parable is a lesson wrapped up in a story. Men are for the most part unfitted or unwilling to receive didactic instruction unless it be in some manner disguised ; and the parable cloaks the moral teaching to be conveyed in the guise of some easily remembered simile. Though words may, in the course of years, come to bear a changed meaning, and phrases and idioms lose their point, the teaching given, suggested or insinuated, in the form of a parable will be preserved unchanged for centuries for the instruction of those who have insight and give the necessary care and industry to master its hidden meaning.

Men, the bigger children of the world, love a story, and their Maker, who knew what was in man, chose the parable as His familiar way of setting before them the secrets of His kingdom. This was so remarkable a feature in the ministry of Christ, that two of the Evangelists call attention to it. "All these things," writes St Matthew,\* "Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes, and without parables He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world."† And St Luke tells us that "with many such parables He spoke to them the word, according as they were able to hear, and without a parable He did not speak to them, but apart He explained all things to His disciples."‡

Such then, as both prophecy and Gospel narrative inform us, was the method of our Lord in expounding the new law and the thoughts of His Sacred Heart; and it is clearly our duty and our interest to try and enter into the hidden meaning of the parables, which embody so much of His teaching. Though so simple in their language their meaning is often profound, and their import on our spiritual well-being cannot be exaggerated. And because "He explained all things to His disciples," we must be careful to enter on their study under the guidance of those who, by an unbroken tradition, have derived their knowledge of their meaning from those very disciples to whose wondering ears and hearts He first unveiled their significance, and who, in the one

\* xiii, 33. † Ps. lxxvii, 2. ‡ Luke iv, 34.

Apostolic Church, have passed the lesson down the ages from their day to our own. If, before our Lord came, the Psalmist, inspired of God, sang, "I will incline mine ear to a parable";\* if the son of Sirach said of the wise man that he should "enter withal into the subtilties of parables," "search out the hidden meaning of proverbs and be conversant in the meaning of parables,"† how much more should the parables of the uncreated wisdom of God be the subject of our study, a guide to a fuller knowledge of the divine will, an inspiration to higher and better things!

There is another point not to be forgotten in dealing with the parables of Jesus. Not only was His verbal teaching to so large an extent by way of parable, but His actions also sometimes partook of the same method. He carried on, occasionally at least, into the miracles He wrought and the circumstances under which He wrought them, the teaching begun by a parable; His actions in such cases had, like His words, a hidden or sacramental meaning; and the one mode of teaching often throws light on the other. We may have occasion presently to refer to one or two instances of this.

There is another noteworthy point about the parables: the wide range of subjects which our Lord laid under contribution to convey His meaning or elucidate His teaching. The subject matter of the parables embraces the lowliest incidents of domestic life, no less than the ways of courts and kings. Lessons are drawn from the tales of travellers on the road between Jeru-

\* Ps. xlviij, 5. † Eccclus xxxix, 3.

salem and Jericho; from the behaviour of Pharisee or publican in the Temple; from the children in the market-place, the labourers waiting to be hired for the day's work, the fig-trees and mulberries and vines in the gardens, the foundation and building of houses, the sites of cities, the grain in the furrow, the fields white unto harvest, the oxen, birds and poultry of the farm, the ways of fishermen and shepherds. Scarcely any aspect of life can be named, whether in town or country, temple, court or camp, home, farm or vineyard, on sea or on land, but the Maker and Ruler of all draws some lesson for the encouragement, instruction or reproof of those who heard His words when He conversed among the children of men, or who, in times foreseen by Him, were to come hereafter to the knowledge of His words.

And equally wide is the range of spiritual subjects which the parables convey. Some deal with the soul in its personal relation to God—with His love for those whom He has created, a love like that which makes the hen gather her chicks beneath her wings, or that which moved the father of the prodigal to compassion for His repentant son. Others tell us of His individual care for us: that of the careful woman who lighted her lamp and swept her house and sought diligently until she found the goad which had been lost; or that of the good Samaritan, a figure of our Lord, caring for the poor dying man, typical of our fallen nature, robbed, stripped of all grace, and half dead, sought out by the All-Merciful and tended back to life and health; or that other of the shepherd, who, leaving the ninety



and nine sheep, went out to find the one that had strayed and brought it back on his shoulders to the fold from which it had strayed. Others too, and with these we are more immediately concerned, deal with our Lord's provision for the future government of His elect, with the nature, growth and characteristics of His Church which He made known prophetically, veiled under the purposeful obscurity of parabolic teaching.

And first as to the nature of His Church, which was to perpetuate His work and be His witness unto the end of time. "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

He was to establish a kingdom indeed, but a kingdom not of this world; to build a Church, a temple, but a temple not made with hands; a house, a city, a kingdom, which should never be overthrown. And what similitude does He make use of?

"Every one therefore that heareth these My words and doeth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock. And the rains fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded on a rock";\* or, as St Luke put it, † "He is like to a man building a house, who digged deep and laid the foundation upon a rock: and when a flood came, the stream beat violently upon that house, and it could not shake it, for it was founded on a rock." Do not these words throw light on the work of the Divine Builder of the Church, that all-wise God-Man, wiser and greater

\* Matt. vii, 25. † vii, 48.

than Solomon the temple-builder, who came into this world to build a house for the saving of mankind, a house strong enough to resist all the floods and storms which the princes and powers of this darkness can arouse against it. Did not our Lord dig deep when He chose out Simon the son of Jona, who had, first of His followers, learnt, not from flesh and blood but from the Father in Heaven, the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth? Here then, in the humble fisherman of Galilee, was the chosen foundation. "I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."\* This was the rock on which was built the tower, the work of the wise householder, † Christ, a work begun with so much forethought and counting of the cost, reckoning the charges that were necessary, and laying foundations which none can overturn. ‡ Thus was the Church begun on a foundation chosen and laid by God Himself. And here we may see how parable and work explain one the other; teaching and act, joined together for the welfare of the souls of men, may not be parted asunder.

But against this house of God, built firm upon Peter the rock, against this city of God seated on a mountain, this Church visible to all the world, the gates of hell shall never prevail. Our Lord's words, comforting as they are, and giving us assurance of final victory, as of integral immunity, warn us at the same time of the inevitableness of the conflict in which His Church must ever be engaged, or for which at any rate it must ever be prepared. Even were we inclined to look for peace

\* Matt. xvi, 18.    † Matt. xxi, 33.    ‡ Luke xiv, 28.

where there can be no final peace—for we have not here a lasting city, but seek one which is to come, a new Jerusalem coming down from Heaven—the world would all too soon rouse us from our daydreams. The gates of hell, the powers of evil, of darkness, of sin, of ignorance, of hatred of God and of His Christ, and of their representative the Church, will be ever at war with God; and the only peace we need hope for in this state of unceasing conflict is the peace which the world cannot give, the peace left to us, given to us by Christ. Struggle, conflict, there must ever be; but “Have confidence,” He says; “I have overcome the world.” This was the secret mainspring of the quiet, firm hope, the calm constancy, the dogged obstinacy (as it must have appeared to their persecutors) which upheld the early Christians in their three centuries of trial, of witness-bearing, of martyrdom; for they knew, as all know who have striven for the truth, or for the Church’s liberty to teach, or for her very existence, that though suffering, shorter or longer as God may will, may be their portion, yet the end is certain: He has overcome the world; and the victory which overcometh the world is the faith of His followers. Let the impious rage never so furiously, if the strong man, Christ, armed with divine omnipotence keepeth His court, the things which He possesseth are in peace. The faith and trust and love of His household are but strengthened by persecution. When the Church is weak, as the world judges of things, then it is strong; for as our Lord said to His servant Paul, “Power is made perfect in infirmity.”\*

\* I Cor. xii, 9.

So much then for the parable of the house built upon a rock, a parable of the beginning of the Church, and of the opposition which the powers of darkness (then and at all times) would raise against it. The Church's growth and development is set before us by our Lord more particularly in two parables, that of the leaven and that of the grain of mustard seed.

The parable of the leaven is one drawn from an ordinary domestic incident, one with which, doubtless, the observant Son of Mary had been of old familiar in the quiet household of Nazareth. "The kingdom of Heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."\*

A vast multitude of men of every nation under heaven, dwelling in the three great divisions of the world known in those days, descendants all of the three sons of the patriarch Noë, whose offspring reseeded the world after the flood, these three measures of meal were to be leavened with the teaching of Christ through the work of a small handful of men. And "as a little leaven corrupteth [or changeth] the whole lump,"† so was the teaching of the twelve to change the face of the earth. For here we are not left in any doubt as to the meaning which our Lord attached to "the leaven" in this parable. Twice He warned His followers against the "leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," that is to say, "the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees."‡ Christ's leaven, then, which was to influence all mankind, was His teaching which

\* Matt. xiii, 33. † Gal v, 9. ‡ Matt. xvi, 11.

was to be spread throughout the world by the multitude of His believers and followers, a "little flock" to whom He promised a kingdom. They were to carry His name all over the world; and, when *they* spoke, *His* voice was heard: "He that heareth you heareth me"; and their work was to go on always: "Go ye and teach all nations; behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." Thus the leaven works, thus the Gospel is spread. The message uttered by Christ to His immediate disciples is communicated by them to others; individuals first, then families, coteries, cities, empires come under the influence of the leaven; quietly and unseen the work goes on, unnoticed at first by the world, for "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation";\* but surely and inevitably the doctrine of heavenly wisdom reaches in time from end to end of the earth mightily, yet ordereth all things sweetly. When we look back to the history of the Catholic Church in the past, or observe its quiet silent progress to-day and all around us, how apt a figure does not the leaven seem of the way God has ordained that His Gospel should be spread throughout the world!

And to the parable of the leaven we may join another similitude of our Lord's, drawn from the home experience of His earthly life, which puts before us a feature of the office and work of the Church and its lawful ministry. "You are the salt of the earth," He said to His disciples;† that "good salt"‡ wherewith "every victim shall be salted";§ for "every one shall

\* Luke xvii, 20. † Matt. v, 13. ‡ Luke xiv, 34. § Mark ix, 48.



be salted with fire." What is this fire wherewith we must be salted but the fire which the incarnate love of God came to cast upon the earth,\* and which His grace and His ministers, with His unseen presence but most real co-operation, scatter broadcast over the world? "Have salt in you, and have peace among you," said Christ; † that is to say: Hold fast to the apostolic teaching given you by My Church, and you shall be filled "with all joy and peace in believing." ‡

Under the parable of the grain of mustard-seed some other characteristics of the Church's growth are shown forth. "To what is the kingdom of God like, and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard-seed which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew, and became a great tree, and the birds of the air lodged in the branches thereof." § In its beginning the Church and kingdom of Christ resembled this grain of mustard-seed, which when sown in the earth is less than all the seeds that are in the earth. || Its origin was as humble as humble could be: a few poor fishermen, uncultured, obscure, a dozen or so of pious women, a handful of adherents from various ranks, only a hundred-and-twenty in all; but what an increase God gave to that divine seed; how it has grown, and still grows in God's garden, the world! What are the conditions of this growth and development of the mustard-seed, the Church? Its life and hidden inward strength are derived indeed from Him who planted it, the Lord and Giver of Life. But it is also His gift, and an effect of His

\* Luke xii, 49. † Mark ix, 49. ‡ Rom. xv, 13.

§ Luke xiii, 18. || Mark iv, 31.

continued presence with the Church, that it is able, tree-like, to derive support and nourishment from the soil wherein it is planted, and the air which environs it. Given a favourable soil, a tree will spread out its roots far and wide. Again, in a kindly and suitable climate, with freely circulating air, and unobstructed sunshine, a tree will flourish as it cannot do in a bleak or unkindly site, with the breezes and the light of heaven shut out from its trunk and branches. So is it with the Church: it flourishes more in one age than in another, more in one country than in another. The disposition of the people among whom it is planted, their natural virtues, their reverent attitude towards God, liberty and freedom from State interference, all make for the healthy growth and development of the Church; whereas, on the other hand, the restrictions of a foolish, fearsome policy on the part of earthly rulers, the hindrances placed by them on freedom of intercourse between head and members, the adverse winds of hostility or persecution, tend, no less than the ingrained malice which prevails in some quarters, to check the due growth of the Church. With it as with its Founder, circumstances may be too unpropitious for its due and untrammelled expansion. "Coming into His own country," Jesus "wrought not many miracles there because of their unbelief";\* and in like sort the dispositions, natural or acquired, of those among whom its work lies, the course, friendly or hostile, of worldly policy, the thousand and one influences which environ it, all tend to modify in greater or less degree

\* Matt. xiii, 58.

the outward growth and well-being of the Church. If at any period or in any country the Church does not flourish, the fault must be looked for, not in the Church, but in the adverse conditions under which it labours.

But whether its fortunes be adverse or favourable, whether bleak wintry winds check its expansion, or gentle showers and favouring breezes and genial sunshine clothe it with foliage, the words of its planter are true, the birds of the air make it their home and shelter. Ever has the Church been the home of all that is highest and purest among men; there the lowliest can nestle, there the most intellectual can find rest. The child in its innocence, the modest maiden, the wisest of scientists, are alike at home within the Church's shelter. Hers it has been to give inspiration and encouragement to all that minister to the cultivation of talent and the adornment of life. The arts and sciences, architecture, music, painting, derive from her a new life, a new nobility: "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline,"\* it is within the shelter of the Tree of Life, the Church, that they must be sought and found.

Yet another parable of the life and growth of the Church, the parable of the vine. "I am the vine, you are the branches," said our Lord;† "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman"; and as the branch cannot bear fruit unless it remain united to the vine, so are we useless and without the

\* Phil. iv, 8.

† John xv, 5.

power of well-doing unless we remain united to Christ. Therefore does the Church keep close to her Lord and Life, cherishing His doctrine, perpetuating His sacramental presence. And if trouble or persecution come upon her, she is not taken by surprise. If they have called the master Beelzebub how much more them of his household? The eternal Father, the heavenly vine-dresser, will take away every branch that beareth not fruit in Christ; nay, more, "every one that beareth fruit he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit."\* The pruning of the vine, the digging about its roots, trial, persecution, all these things are inevitable, if the Divine will is to prevail. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."† Trials then, and suffering, are a mark of the true Church.

The Church is not only the vine: it is the vineyard as well; the vineyard into which the master is for ever inviting the labourers standing idle in the market place;‡ the vineyard whereunto the Father and Lord of all sent His only Son, saying: They will reverence My Son;§ that Son Whom wicked men cast forth out of the vineyard of the Jewish Church, and, having treated Him contumeliously, put Him to death.

The Church, then, founded on Peter the Rock by Christ the master builder, and become an object of suspicion and hate to all who receive not Christ, still stands firm and will stand. Its heavenly doctrine, like the silent unseen working of the leaven, is for ever in-

\* Johu xv, 2.

† 1 Tim. iii, 12.

‡ Matt. xx.

§ Matt. xxi.

fluencing the world around. It has grown like the grain of mustard-seed into a great tree, filling the whole earth, is become the refuge and safe shelter of all that is best and holiest in human nature. Like the vine it drew its strength from Christ, by persecution and suffering it is strengthened and purified that it may bring forth fruit more abundantly. And, as into a vineyard, Christ is ever inviting labourers to work in His Church.

Under the parables are set forth certain other features of the Church's history: features which perhaps we should be otherwise unprepared for, were we to rely alone on our own opinion of what might be expected in a divine work. Our Lord foresaw this, and therefore over and over again warned His followers of the danger they were in, of the risks they ran, of the ever present need of care and vigilance. Thus to Simon Peter, a little before His passion, He uttered those solemn words: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat, but behold I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not"; or again, "He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall"; and once more, "It must needs be that scandals come." A similar warning is conveyed in the parable of the sower who went forth to sow; an enemy sowed tares amid the wheat. Of the good seed which was scattered by the divine sower, much was wasted, some fell among thorns, some on stony ground, some was trodden under foot; not all by any means brought forth its hundredfold. So in the Church much good effort seems at times wasted, little or no result seems to follow from the most patient and persevering mis-

sionary effort. Again it is not the seed that is at fault but the stony soil, or the riches and cares of the world, or the overmuch immersion in worldly matters. The Church is not, nor need hope to be, more successful than her Founder, Whom the world set at naught and despised.

From the work of the fisherman again other lessons may be drawn, as our Lord drew them, for the guidance and encouragement of His followers. "Fishers of men," as the apostles were called to be, they at times must expect to labour all night and take nothing; even when their net is full, and nigh to breaking, they must expect to find in it, together with good and useful fish, others that are useless and poisonous. That the increase in their catch is God's work, and not to be obtained by human industry, is shown by the miraculous draught of fishes which twice rewarded their obedience, once before and once after the Resurrection.\*

They labour not for themselves but for God; it is not theirs to command success but to merit it by hopeful toil and prompt obedience; God will give the increase when and how He pleases. Provided the work be done in obedience it will bring its blessing, and blessing does not always take the form of success. There are fields white unto the harvest, waiting for the labourers to gather in the crops, men who shall preach because they are sent, † sent by Him who bade His apostles go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. They are sure of this if of nothing else, that, if they do their best, the kingdom of God will somehow or other be advanced.

\* Matt. iv; John xxi.

† Rom. x, 14.



The parables and words of Jesus so far dealt with have had to do with the foundation and growth of the Church. There is one more topic of primary importance yet to be treated of—i.e. the government of the Church. And here we have so clear a light from our Lord's own teaching that there can be with men of goodwill little or no difficulty in catching His meaning, as there will of necessity be on the part of such a reverent curiosity to see wherein the fulfilment of His words and parables may be found. Under no figure does our Lord paint His character and work more strikingly than under the figure of the Good Shepherd; under no figure did His early followers more frequently represent Him in their hidden houses of assembly and prayer in the catacombs of Rome. Himself the Good Shepherd, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, the final commission which He gave to His vicegerent Peter was precisely this of continuing the work and office of chief shepherd when He should have passed away. "The Bishop and Shepherd of our souls" passed on this office to St Peter at that memorable meeting by the lakeside shortly before His Ascension. One fold and one shepherd there must be for the safety and government of the flock. The pastor chosen for the work is he who, once converted, was to confirm his brethren in the apostolic college,\* and who now was to feed the lambs and the sheep of Christ, and shepherd the whole flock.† Now it is impossible to deny the purpose of our Lord in this analogy of the sheepfold and the Church, of the shepherd and the vicegerent of Christ, the supreme

\* Luke xxii, 32. † John xxi, 16, 17.

Pontiff. A sheepfold, on plain or hillside, is an object which none can fail to notice. The barriers set up around the flock, the presence of the head-shepherd and his assistants, the separateness of the whole from all around for the well-being of the sheep, teach us what we may look for where this divine simile finds its realization in the Church. We look to find, as the first of the shepherds who ruled the flock after the departure of the Good Shepherd has said, "a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people";\* a flock fenced around and watched over by him to whom its custody has been committed, fed with celestial truth and life-giving sacraments, guarded from error, defended from the wolves, and from our adversary the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom among the sheep he may devour.† This is the holy people of God whom the chief pastor and his assistant shepherds, the bishops, appointed "by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God,"‡ are to watch over, "not by constraint but willingly, according to God, not for filthy lucre's sake, but voluntarily, neither lording it over the clergy, but being made a pattern to the flock from the heart," that when He the Prince of Pastors shall appear, "they may receive a never fading crown of glory."§

The unity of the flock, co-operation among the assistant shepherds, the maintenance of faith and obedience and discipline throughout, demands as the condition of its permanence and well-being the rule of one man. This necessity is foretold by our Lord,

\* 1 Peter ii, 8. † 1 Peter v, 8. ‡ Acts xx, 28. § 1 Peter v, 4.

and His words carry their own accomplishment, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." Without this divine provision for the peace and unity of His people, the plan and organization of the Church would have lacked completeness. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," would be impossible without the divinely constituted and divinely guarded headship of one supreme pastor. Nowhere but in the Church Catholic can anything at all answering to those words of Christ about the one fold and the one shepherd be found, and His words "shall not pass away." Without this headship and rule, over the whole people of God, the Church would long since have perished, as those bodies which have separated from Catholic unity have perished or are now perishing. The jarring of contending sects, the discrepancies of doctrine, the ambition of false pastors, the demand of earthly rulers to rule the Church of God, would long since have reduced to nought Christ's kingdom on earth, had its unity not been safeguarded by the authority and pre-eminence of the chief pastor, successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ. The Church has lasted now for over eighteen centuries, and will last until the end, and, in the future as in the past, its unity can only be, and will be, secured by the rule of its own earthly head. Thus alone in the divine counsels can it continue to be the one fold of Christ.

Such are some of the lessons taught us by the parables of our Lord about His all-wise and all-holy plans for the continuance of His work, and the saving

of innumerable souls; thus has He taught men to find the true meaning of those parables in the facts of the Church's history; thus has He marked off from all other bodies, by notes and characteristics of His own ordaining, His kingdom here below, the Holy Catholic Church.

DOM GILBERT DOLAN, O.S.B.

## CHAPTER II

## The Visible Unity of the Catholic Church

UNITY, as one of the marks of the Catholic Church, may be taken either in the sense that there can only be one Church instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, to the formal exclusion of any other; or in the sense that the Church founded by Him is one and undivided, that all its members from the first to the last have one and the same Faith, one and the same standard of morality, the same means of salvation, and are governed on the same principles. This latter meaning of the term unity follows with logical cogency from the former; for, if our Lord did establish a Church as a living body, this Church must always remain essentially unchanged, otherwise His work falls to the ground and His promises fail. In this latter sense, again, the term *Unity* presents several features properly belonging to the marks of Apostolicity, Catholicity, Indefectibility and others; nor can it be considered altogether apart from these. On the other hand, Unity, taken in the sense of oneness, receives its full light by being considered in connexion with both doctrine and discipline. We shall endeavour to deal with the mark of Unity in this twofold sense, so far as the space at our disposal permits.

The articles belonging to the third part of the Creed received their present form at a comparatively late

period. The oldest versions, as the ancient Roman, Aquileian, African and others, speak only of "the holy Church." The next step was taken by the insertion of the word "Catholic." About the middle of the fourth century we find the further addition of the word "one," to "holy Catholic Church." This word *one* should not be taken as an "indefinite" expression, but as a numeral, for in this sense it is used in the Latin and Greek texts. It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that, because the unity of the Church was, for several centuries, not asserted in the Creed, it was not considered one of its most essential characteristics. Only those doctrines are alluded to in the Creed which formed the object of controversy, and this particular point, the Church's inviolable unity, was never called into question. No one had ever denied the necessity of unity, either in the sense of oneness, or in the wider sense explained above. To assail such a prominent article of belief it would have been necessary to obliterate some of the most forcible words of our Lord, such as His prayer, "Holy Father, keep them [the Apostles] in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me: that they may be one, as We also are. . . . And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me: that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me";\* or His emphatic assertion that there shall be "one fold and one shepherd."†

\* John xvii, 11, 20, 21, 22.      † John x, 16.



The Catechism of the Council of Trent, commonly called the Roman Catechism, thus speaks of the mark of unity:

“Her first distinctive character, described in the Creed of the Fathers, is unity: ‘One is my dove; my perfect one is but one.’\* So vast a multitude, although scattered far and wide, is called one, for the reasons mentioned by St Paul to the Ephesians; for he proclaims that there is ‘but one Lord, one faith, one baptism.’† Her ruler and governor is also one: the invisible One, indeed, Christ, Whom the Eternal Father has given to be head over all the Church, which is His Body;‡ but the visible one, he who as the legitimate successor of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, occupies the See of Rome.”§

From this statement it follows that the union of the members with the head of the Church may be understood in a twofold sense, i.e., (1) a visible union corresponding to the visible head and the visible members; and (2) an invisible one, under the invisible Head. Before we proceed further, it is important to explain this distinction.

Christ founded the kingdom of God upon earth. In its earthly condition it shares in common with all things terrestrial, certain imperfections, for absolute perfection belongs to the next world only. No human being will belong to God’s kingdom in heaven who did not belong to it on earth. For Christ is “the way, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him.”||

\* Cant. vi, 8.    † Eph. iv, 5.    ‡ Col. i, 24.

§ Catech. part 1, ch. x, qu. 10.    || John xiv, 6.

From this text we must not conclude that all those who belong to His kingdom on earth are certain one day to belong to His kingdom in heaven; for the present life is a state of probation, and only he that shall persevere unto the end will be saved.\*

We must therefore carefully distinguish between the body and the soul of the Church. The former comprises all those who, by the sacrament of baptism, have been made its members, quite independently of the actual state of their souls. Some of these visible members of the visible Church may be holy, others indifferent, others wavering between goodness and sinfulness, whilst others again may be absolutely wicked, Christians in nothing more than the name, a scandal to their neighbour and a source of sorrow and shame to their mother, the Church. And, since we have mentioned baptism as the entrance gate of the Church, let us add that, there being but one baptism, all those who have been validly baptized, whether by Catholics or by non-Catholics, belong to the body of the Catholic Church, so long as they do not separate themselves from her by an act of heresy or schism, and so are not excluded from the unity of the Church by the authority of the Church itself.

To the soul of the Church belong all those, and only those, who are living in the state of grace, whose sins are forgiven, and who are walking in the light with fidelity to the dictates of conscience. A diligent investigator might, perhaps, ascertain the number and names of those who belong to the body of the Church,

\* Matt. x, 22.

because, as we have seen, membership is obtained by a visible ceremony. But God alone knows the number and the names of those belonging to the soul of the Church, since He alone knows the human heart. We can never be certain about the state of our own soul, much less about the souls of others. Therefore God alone knows whether we ourselves belong to the soul of the Church or not, as He alone knows the number of the elect. Among these may be many who never belonged to the visible body of the Church, not only separated Christians (who, in virtue of their baptism, if properly administered, have become members of the visible Church, though they may have fallen away from it), but Jews, Moslems and even pagans. For to every human being a fair chance of salvation is given, since Christ is the light which "enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,"\* while of those to whom little is given, little will be asked. All these, then, whether Catholics or non-Catholics, Christians or non-Christians, are united together by an invisible bond, viz., God's grace; their unity is perfect and real, though it is of necessity invisible.

No one should presumptuously take advantage of this doctrine of the Catholic Church by remaining separated from the body of the Church on the plea that he may, all the same, belong to her soul, and thus obtain salvation. Christ in offering to non-Catholics, and even to non-Christians, a chance of salvation, follows the promptings of His infinitely

\* John i, 9.

merciful Heart, making use of extraordinary means, where the ordinary means established by Himself are unavailable. But such extraordinary means will be denied to those who could have availed themselves of the ordinary means, but knowingly and wilfully neglected to do so. Moreover, our life is beset with so many difficulties, that we cannot afford to despise or dispense with the strength that comes to us through the sacraments, and for these we depend upon the ministrations of the Church.

Having drawn this distinction between the body and the soul of the Church, we now turn to the mark of visible Unity which, of course, belongs to the visible Church. We profess our belief in One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. These characteristics are the signs whereby men can know which is the Church established by Jesus Christ. She is like the city built upon a mountain,\* which not only cannot be hid, but which is visible to friend and foe alike. Whether it be for the purpose of joining her or with a view to attacking her, people must be able to distinguish her from among many similar organizations, and even a slender knowledge of history will show that her enemies at any rate have not failed to notice her marks, and to direct their weapons against her. Among these marks the note of visible unity is not the least important.

Numerous passages in the New Testament—to say nothing of the prophecies in the Old—warn us that there can be but one Church, that the members of that Church must be united by a mutual bond, that

\* Matt. v, 14.

they are brothers, members of one body, and that, while schisms and heresies are certain to spring up, the authors of these incur the terrible responsibility of rending themselves and their followers asunder from the seamless garment of Christ, by introducing divisions among His children.

It is scarcely necessary here to point out that the frequent mention of local Churches, such as the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth and others, in no way militates against the mark of visible unity. Unity must be sought, not in the gathering together of a number of persons, but in the moral link of conformity in essential matters. These essentials are faith, worship, discipline and government. Apart from these there may be differences of custom, laws and other accidentals. Whether we view the Catholic Church as scattered through the whole world at any given time (say, after the death of the apostles, or in the middle ages, or in the twentieth century); or whether we compare her earlier stages with later periods or even with our own times, we shall find that while customs and laws have greatly changed, the essentials of faith, worship, discipline and government, have remained unchanged from first to last, and are the same all the world over, notwithstanding the various degrees of civilization of the countries where the Church is, or has been established. This is a unity visible even to her deadliest enemies.

Outside the Catholic Church there is no such unity. Not only is there no unity of faith between the various sections and fractions of Christendom,

but the Creed of almost every national sect, and of every other denomination, has undergone radical changes. Even at the present time it is by no means an unheard-of thing that one and the same pulpit is occupied in the morning by a minister who boldly enunciates a doctrine, and in the evening by another who contradicts it; or that one official document, say the thirty-nine Articles of the English Establishment, asserts one thing; whilst another, say the Confession of Faith of the Scottish Establishment, denies it; that one authority, for instance an Anglican bishop of one party, proclaims a certain tenet as an undoubted axiom of his Church, whilst a brother bishop denies that the selfsame tenet forms any part of its Creed. It will be admitted on all hands that this is not the unity for which our Lord prayed, at the most solemn moment of His earthly life, nor that it is the one faith proclaimed by St Paul; an outsider would fail to recognize in a religion where such divergencies are possible that one Church which bears the obvious marks of its divine origin.

It might be urged that in the Catholic Church, also, there has been a development of doctrine, and that there have been schools of theology opposed to each other, and combating one another, and this not always in a charitable spirit. We will only mention the disputes concerning the nature and operations of divine grace, hotly discussed between the Dominicans and the Jesuits and treated of by other religious orders as well as by the secular clergy. Again, in matters of discipline, we may instance the attacks of the Domi-



nicans upon the Jesuits regarding certain practices of their missionaries in China.

It is just in matters like these that the unity of the Catholic Church exhibits itself most brilliantly. There are, indeed, differences of opinion, both on theological and on practical questions. But, in the first place, this can only occur in matters which affect faith and morals only remotely, because all the fundamental doctrines, having been clearly defined many centuries ago, can never be called in question among Catholics. And, secondly, both parties in the disputes alluded to were from the beginning anxious to submit unconditionally to the decision of the Church the moment such a decision was given, or, what was still better, both sides courted the final judgement of the Holy See. It is not the custom of the Church to forestall disputes, but to pronounce judgement when the necessity arises, and even then she sometimes prefers to leave the question open. This is exactly what happened in the former of the two disputes alluded to. The Dominicans as well as the Jesuits, and, in fact, all Catholics held the doctrines concerning grace and free will defined by the Council of Trent; they admitted the efficacy of the former and the reality of the latter; they were agreed that these two apparently antagonistic factors were mysteriously brought into harmony at a given point, but they disagreed as to the position of that point and the mystery surrounding it. It requires a trained theologian to grasp the full meaning and the importance of the dispute, as well as the bearing upon it of the teaching of St

Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas and other Fathers and Doctors of the Church. When the dispute, which began in 1581, had lasted fifteen years, and had divided nearly all Catholic theologians into different camps, the matter was thoroughly sifted in Rome by a Congregation of Cardinals and theologians, who, in the course of ten years, held about three hundred meetings. Finally Pope Paul V refrained from pronouncing judgement, allowing both opinions to be publicly taught and only imposing certain restrictions upon the disputants. There the matter rests to the present day, as an open question, in which every one is free to take whichever side he pleases. No dogmatic principle is at stake, therefore no dogmatic decision is required.

When, however, the dogmatic teaching of the Church becomes involved, as it did in the case of Jansenius, the Church promptly shows where the error lies, and condemns it unhesitatingly.

The same thing happens in questions concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of certain actions and customs. The Church has been established not only as the preacher and teacher of faith, but also as the guardian of morals. It, therefore, lies within her province to pronounce judgement as to right and wrong, as well as concerning what is true and what is false. Many questions belonging to the moral code are so complex that even the most learned men may be at a loss to declare whether a given action is under certain circumstances strictly right and defensible, or wrong and inadmissible. As a rule, a conscientious person

will be careful to keep well within the line separating wrong from right, but cases may undoubtedly arise, and do arise, when these limits have to be clearly defined. Such a question arose in connexion with certain customs in use among the Chinese, which some missionaries considered harmless, and therefore permissible in the case of converts, while to others they appeared tainted with superstition and on that score inadmissible. The Chinese language, too, lent itself with difficulty to the expression of Catholic doctrine, and for the want of more appropriate terms some missionaries tolerated expressions in public worship which to others seemed wholly inappropriate. This difficult matter having occupied its attention for nearly a hundred years (1645-1742), the Holy See finally pronounced against the customs, though fully aware that the decision would go far to destroy one of the most hopeful missions in the world, and would lead, as in fact it did, to grievous persecution of both missionaries and neophytes.

In more recent times the Holy See condemned the plan of Campaign, a practice devised with a view to settling a burning question which for years had preoccupied the British Parliament. Many excellent Catholics, whose conscientiousness no one has ever doubted, were convinced of the justice of their actions, but the Holy See decided otherwise, and the practices in question were forthwith discontinued.

These examples, which might be multiplied, show that, notwithstanding the unity of the Church in faith and morals, there is freedom of thought and

action in all things upon which the Church has not pronounced judgement. But the moment a dogmatic definition is given, or the unlawfulness of an action declared, that freedom ceases, because the judgement is binding on all members of the Church. At the present time a Catholic theologian may still adopt or reject Thomism according to his own preferences, but no Catholic would dream of questioning papal infallibility, or of reviving the Chinese practices, or of carrying out the Plan of Campaign.

It may be useful to point out a further consequence of the unity of the Church in matters of faith, namely, uniformity in the interpretation of Holy Scripture. By the Creed of Pius IV Catholics bind themselves to receive Holy Scripture according to that sense which was always held and is still held by holy Church, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; and never to receive or interpret the same otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. There are numerous parts of Holy Scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments which have a distinct dogmatic or moral bearing, and upon the meaning of which the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are agreed. Thus, there can be no two interpretations of the sacramental words, "This is My Body"; or of those other words of our Lord, "Thou art Peter." The Fathers are unanimous as to their meaning, and the Church has given her decision. Any deviation from this interpretation would place a man outside the pale of the Church. Again, there are passages to which the

Church, without actually giving a decision, has attached a certain meaning. We may mention as an example the Canticle of Canticles, which, in the eyes of the Church is descriptive of the ardent love of Christ for the Church or for the human soul endowed with sanctifying grace. A different interpretation would be offensive, because it would be contrary to a constant "feeling" of the Church; *sentire cum ecclesia* being one of the marks of a true Catholic. From this, however, it does not follow that every interpretation given by the Fathers is sanctioned by the Church and, therefore, obligatory on Catholics. There have been various exegetical schools; sometimes allegorical interpretations have been carried to an extent which jars on our more sober judgement; at other times literal and historical explanations have been the fashion, where a mystically inclined mind would prefer to seek a deeper meaning. A more exact knowledge of the languages in which the Holy Scriptures were written, and a more accurate investigation of the various readings of the text, have gone a long way to correct antiquated explanations which to us, living in the twentieth century, cannot but appear unreal and hazardous. Here again we see that while in all essentials there is and must be unity, there still remains room for individual taste and personal freedom. Where no decision of the Church is to be found, there we may use our freedom. The Church has never applied the closure to the study of Holy Scripture; on the contrary, there may be much that is still quite unknown to us, and will only become clear in the future when the needs of the times render

it necessary. For Holy Scripture is the Word of God, and God has provided it for all times.

The visible unity of the Church is further demonstrated by the unity of worship. It is scarcely needful to say that different rites and ecclesiastical languages in no way militate against this unity. The liturgy of the Church is a living organism which developed from small beginnings until it reached proportions of marvellous beauty, and has passed also, at times, through periods of decadence. But in its essential parts it has remained from first to last unchanged, for the prayers of the Church have a dogmatic bearing: *Formula orandi lex credendi*.

The Christian worship manifests itself chiefly in the administration and use of the sacraments. As to these there always has been absolute unity. This is all the more wonderful as neither the New Testament nor the earliest Fathers have left us a clear definition of the essence and number of the sacraments. But for the unity of the Church some of these sacred rites might have been considered as sacraments in one country, but not in another, owing to different conceptions of the essence of a sacrament. Were it not for the invariable tradition of the Church, the sacraments of Confirmation, Extreme Unction and Matrimony might not have been readily and universally recognized as institutions of our Lord. But if we turn to the early Fathers, we find the teaching of the Church was sufficiently established from the first, and, while in other matters violent controversies were raised over hair-splitting subtleties, the number and essence of the sacraments were

scarcely ever called into question. It was reserved for the reformers of the sixteenth century and their immediate forerunners to raise doubts on this subject. Then, and only then, did it become necessary for the Church to decide whether Christ instituted two, or three, or seven sacraments, and what they were, and what effects they had. Prior to that epoch many sects had fallen away from the Church, but they maintained their belief in the sacraments, however grotesquely they may have misrepresented their essence.

Were any of the early Christians to rise from their tombs in the catacombs, they would recognize in the Catholic worship of our own times, not merely the elements but also some details of the form of worship to which they were accustomed; they knew the seed, and we possess the full-grown tree. As for the essential formulas of some of the sacraments scarcely any change is to be found in those of later ages, and, even where the form has been changed, it is now as it was then merely expressive of the grace of the sacrament. Early Christians returning to life would perhaps be surprised that public penance has been almost entirely discontinued, and they might also be bewildered by numerous degrees and dignities added to the hierarchy. In the ceremonies of Baptism they would recognize, contracted into one continuous action, the various stages of probation through which they themselves had passed before being admitted to the sacred font. At Confirmation they would still find the imposition of the hands of the bishop, whereby they received the sevenfold graces of the Holy Ghost. The sacrament



of Penance would appear to them fraught with less difficulty than it did in their own time though unchanged as to the underlying principles. In the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice they would recognize many features with which they had been familiar, and the present teaching of the Catholic Church would prove to them that after some 1900 years Christians still maintain the belief expressed by Saint Ignatius\* that in this sacrament "we receive the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has suffered for our sins but which the Father out of His lovingkindness hath resuscitated." They would likewise be familiar with the orders of the diaconate and the priesthood, as well as with episcopal consecration, neither would they notice any appreciable difference in the duties, right and prerogatives attached to each of these degrees. Likewise, the anointing of the sick, as the last complement of the penitential practice,† and the Christian consecration of Matrimony would present scarcely any difference from what they had witnessed in the beginning.

In all these and in many other matters, such as intercessory prayers for the dead, the unity of the Catholic Church is manifest. Heresies and schisms have come and gone, but, if they touched these points at all, it was with a comparatively light hand, the more serious attacks being reserved for more modern times. It would be absurd to expect that any one of the Fathers should have treated these matters exhaustively; for their books were written for the needs of

\* Ep. ad Smyrn. vii, 1.    † Orig. in Levit.

the moment—for the defence of Christianity against the calumnies of pagans, for the consolation of local Churches, or for the refutation of heretics, whose attacks were directed against the doctrines of the Blessed Trinity or the Incarnation. But any one who takes the trouble to read through the whole Christian literature of the first three centuries and compares it with the results of Christian archæological research, will be struck by the visible and manifest unity of the Church both in doctrine and in worship, and the complete agreement between the Church of the catacombs and that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This unity becomes still more manifest when we examine the constitution of the Church. Our Lord might have established Christianity on the plan that the faithful of each town or country should form a society independent of, but yet in sympathy with, similar societies in other towns or kingdoms. Such a system might have served many purposes and would have precluded the danger, unquestionably foreseen by Him, of one Church infecting others, if perchance it should deviate from the straight way. As a matter of fact He did not choose this system, but built His Church on an entirely different principle, by giving to one local Church precedence over all others. He warded off the danger by bestowing upon the Chief Shepherd the gift of infallibility and confirming him in faith. The Pope, as the successor of St Peter, to whom the divine promise was made, is the centre of unity. If after the Ascension of our Lord the Church stood in need of a firm rock, so as not to be overthrown

by furious tempests ; if the apostles themselves required to be "confirmed"; if not only the lambs but even the sheep stood in need of a shepherd, all this was infinitely more necessary when the apostles, one and all, had passed away, and the Church was daily growing, in spite of violent persecution from without, and the insidious designs of heretics from within. To say that His promise was a personal one, and only held good while Peter was alive, would be tantamount to denying that our Lord had sufficiently provided for His Church. So long as the Church was young and small, unity was easily maintained ; when it became more widely extended and personal remembrance of our Lord began to wane, nothing short of a visible and acknowledged centre of unity could keep it together.

As the Catholic Church, taken as a whole, represents the one fold under one shepherd, so each local Church was a fold under a local shepherd, its bishop being appointed by the apostles or elected by the clergy and faithful.\* Saint Ignatius, at the beginning of the second century, frequently dwells on the subject of unity within the local fold. "As the strings of the lute," he says,† "should harmonize with each other, so the clergy and the bishop should be in complete agreement. The bishop represents the heavenly Father ; the priests, the Senate of God and the college of the apostles ; and the deacons Jesus Christ, for their duty is to serve, even as Christ came on earth to be our servant. Without these there can be no real Church."

\* 1 Clem. ad Corinth. xliv.

† S. Ign. ad Eph. iv.

This, He adds, is not His own private opinion, for He knows that the Trallians, to whom His epistle is addressed, believe so too.\* Those of the faithful who act independently of the bishop are severely blamed.† No one who keeps aloof from the bishop, the priests and the deacons can preserve his conscience free from stain; on the other hand, whosoever adheres to the bishop belongs to God's children, and he who honours the bishops is, in turn, honoured by God.‡ Should any one dare to celebrate, not only the Eucharist, but merely the Agape, apart from the bishop, Saint Ignatius declares him guilty of the sin of schism. " Endeavour, therefore," he adds,§ "to use one Eucharist; for there is but one body of our Lord Jesus Christ, one chalice in the unity of His blood, and one altar, as there is also but one bishop with the priests and deacons, my fellow-servants; therefore whatever you do, do it according to God's ordinance."|| In a word, the bishop represents God, and those who wish to belong to God must adhere to their bishop.¶

These quotations could be multiplied, but they will suffice to show how close is the bond, in the eyes of St Ignatius, between the shepherd and his flock. The same bond, only on a very much larger scale, ties the clergy and laity, nay, the bishops themselves, to the Bishop of bishops, the Pope, the successor of Saint Peter. We find this principle alluded to in the Epistles of Saint Ignatius, but, since the demonstration would require more space than we can afford to

\* Trall. c. iii. † Magn. vii. ‡ Magn. iv, Smyr. ix. § Smyr. viii.  
 || Philad. iv. ¶ Eph. c. vi; Philad. iii; Polyc. vi.

give it, we turn to some other writers belonging to the earliest centuries of the Christian era.

First, however, we must once more remind our readers of the clear words of our Divine Lord Himself. To Saint Peter He said: "Feed My lambs; govern My sheep; feed My sheep";\* to him He gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven; upon this rock He built His Church;† for him He prayed that his faith might not fail, and to him, being once converted, He entrusted the office of confirming his brethren, the apostles.‡ Without the Bishop of Rome, as the common shepherd of both sheep and lambs, the highest authority in matters of faith and discipline, the final judge to whom the faithful may appeal, the various local Churches would inevitably have drifted from purity of doctrine and sanctity of Christian life. Without him as the acknowledged representative of Christ upon earth, the unity of the Christian Church would have been chimerical, neither would there have remained any guarantee for her Catholicity and apostolicity. All those sectarians who, in the course of time, have separated from communion with the See of Peter have withdrawn themselves from the living and visible unity of the Church and so have forfeited the remaining marks of the true Church.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the relations between local Churches and Rome have undergone great changes. Communication between distant countries has not always been so easy as it is nowadays. In addition to this there have been periods of

\* John xxi, 15-17. † Matt. xvi, 18. ‡ Luke xxii, 32.

centralization and of decentralization. These, as well as other circumstances, must have modified the intercourse between Rome and the outlying portions of the Church. At no time, perhaps, was it more in vogue than towards the end of the middle ages, when matters of comparatively small importance were submitted to Rome, which, at an earlier as well as at a later period, would have been settled with the greatest ease by the diocesan authorities. A glance at the Calendar of Papal Registers among the Calendars of State Papers will prove instructive to our readers.

It would be absurd to suppose that anything similar could be traced in the early centuries of Church history. Nevertheless, enough facts have survived the loss of numerous historical sources to prove that from the very beginning the Bishop of Rome exercised jurisdiction, not only over his own flock, and over the Western patriarchate, but over the whole Church, and that communion with him was considered an unmistakable sign of communion with the Catholic Church, while an interruption of communion with Rome was tantamount to a break with the Catholic Church.

One of the apostles was still living when a dispute arose at Corinth leading to disturbances among the faithful, and to the deposition of some of the clergy. The question was referred, not to Saint John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, but to Saint Clement, the third successor of St Peter in the See of Rome. His answer is still extant, and is all the more remarkable since he not only gives wholesome advice, such

as any bishop might have done, but, with the voice of authority, settles the dispute. This happened as early as A.D. 96, and is the first instance recorded of an exercise of papal authority over a distant Church.\*

In the next century we find the prerogatives of the Roman See alluded to by Saint Ignatius† and Saint Irenæus.‡ We find, moreover, a Pope, Saint Victor, not actually excommunicating but threatening a considerable portion of the Church with the sentence of excommunication, in the event of non-compliance with the Roman regulations concerning the feast of Easter. This threat evoked lively protests from those concerned, not, be it noticed, because they disputed the power of the Pope, for they tacitly admitted this, but because the punishment was felt to be too severe for what was, after all, not a question of faith or morals, but of uniformity in liturgical matters. Nevertheless, the occurrence proves the existence and the universal acknowledgement of a supreme authority, the visible centre of unity. "Had any other portion of the Church," says Dr Rivington, "talked of cutting off whole Churches from the common unity, it would have only made itself ridiculous. But when the threat comes from Rome, the whole Church is astir; and there is one thing that no one says: neither Saint Irenæus nor the rest of the bishops said, 'It is ridiculous, you have no such authority'; but they exhort, and protest, and warn and entreat him not to do so."§

\* Rivington, *Primitive Church*, p. 9. † Ad Rom. Inscript.

‡ Hær. i, 27; iii, 4. § Rivington, l. c. p. 43.



There is also the case of St Cyprian. Over and over again he insists on the necessity of unity with the successor of him to whom our Lord said: "Thou art Peter," etc. While the Roman Church was without a bishop, after the martyrdom of St Fabian (A.D. 250), St Cyprian was the firmest support of the persecuted Christians, and by his words and writings gradually acquired fame. Rome held him in the highest esteem, but even he was not proof against error, and the day came when the decrees of a Council, presided over by him, were disapproved by Pope Saint Stephen. Third persons intervened, only to fan the smouldering fire into an open conflagration, and unkind words were spoken south and north of the Mediterranean. Saint Cyprian was certainly irritated, but even in his anger he never said or so much as hinted that the Pope had no right to pronounce a final judgement on the question of baptism, or that his threat of excommunication was invalid or *ultra vires*. The death of St Stephen, the outbreak of a new persecution, to which St Cyprian himself fell a victim, brought the matter to a speedy close.

The Church has placed both the Pope and the bishop on the calendar of the Saints. Later writers, as St Augustine, St Vincent of Lerins and others report that St Cyprian "submitted to the judgement of Stephen and corrected his opinion."\*

The same century, the third of our era, has left further evidence as to the belief of the Church in the supreme authority of the successor of St Peter, in

\*Rivington, l. c. pp. 47-116.

a small but highly important treatise on the evil of gambling.\*

Thus we might go on quoting the Fathers and reviewing practically the whole history of the Church, and every page would proclaim the same great truth, that the See of Rome, by the institution of Christ, has become the centre of unity, and that local Churches can only claim to be true Churches so far as they adhere to the centre of unity, the See of Peter. Then, and then only, are they certain to maintain the true faith, and to preserve the principles of Christian morality.

This being so, it follows that, apart from that See, there is no guarantee as to faith or discipline. Even in purely mundane matters authority is required to enforce the respect due to the rights of one's neighbour by which one's personal rights find their natural limits. Without such authority the world would fall a prey to tyranny or anarchy. In spiritual matters the danger is still greater, because so many circumstances combine to quench the spark of faith and to foster revolt against the law. Hence an even higher authority than the civil power is necessary. This authority was actually conferred by our Lord upon Saint Peter, when He said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shall bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

\*De Aleatoribus.

Christ did not come on earth to found Christianity as an abstract form of philosophy, but to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth, namely, His Church, which is a concrete, living organism, visible and palpable. To think that He did this in so slipshod a fashion that the Church lost her distinguishing marks in the course of a few centuries, or was broken up into various fragments, is little short of blasphemy. Whatever He did, He did well. And if He founded any Church at all, He founded but one, and not many contending sects. If He founded but one Church, there is no room for any other. This Church, then, must bear its distinguishing marks in bold characters, so that no one can overlook them. It must be plainly visible, and it must also be inwardly united as it is but one outwardly.

These, as well as other marks, are not common to the Catholic Church and to numerous other Churches, but they belong exclusively to the Catholic Church. Even her enemies know her by these marks, for they have always been able to aim their blows at the object of their aversion. Why, then, should those who are anxious to find the truth be mistaken as to the identity of the Church founded by Christ ?

They will, perhaps, answer that the visible unity of the Catholic Church has been broken more than once, As early as the beginning of the third century we find the first endeavours to deny to the Catholic Church some of her chief characteristics.

Pope Saint Callixtus published (A.D. 220) a decree whereby he admitted to penance those who, after

baptism, had fallen into carnal sins, with a view to restoring to them the use of the sacraments after a certain period spent in penitential exercises. Against this lenient practice there arose the rigorist Tertullian, by that time no longer a Catholic but a Montanist, declaring that Christ's promise to Peter was personal and that no successor of Peter could claim any right to the power of the keys.\* But had not Tertullian himself taught the very opposite doctrine, while he belonged to the true fold,† and were not his recriminations disregarded by the whole Church, which fully admitted the claims of the Pope?

Callixtus was the first Pope to experience the rivalry of an antipope, but the latter finally submitted, and, having suffered martyrdom, was venerated as a saint.

Then there was the terrible schism of Photius, which has lasted nearly a thousand years. By it the Greek Church, in most of its branches, has become detached from the Roman trunk. But how much of her life did she preserve? Would she have withstood a tenth part of the persecutions that have fallen to the lot of the Roman Church? What has she done to break the tyranny of the ruler, or to alleviate the burden of the serf? True, she still keeps the faith and administers the sacraments, but life has deserted her: she merely vegetates.

There were also schisms in the Roman Church. Ambitious men arose from time to time to usurp the papal dignity, which had been denied them by the lawful authority, the will of the Church. They were

\*De Pudicitia, c. xxi.

† De Pœnitentia, c. viii.

for the most part tools in the hands of secular powers, and their parties were ridiculously small. Only once did schism assume threatening proportions. For nearly forty years (1378-1417) there reigned two claimants to the papacy, one in Rome, the other in Avignon; for a short time there were even three. It was the greatest misfortune that could have befallen the Church, and its consequences were felt long after the schism itself was ended. Yet, even then, the necessity of a united Church under one visible head was keenly felt by all parties. The only question was, who was the legitimate Pope? Unfortunately the rival claims were not gauged by the validity (or otherwise) of the election, but by the number and power of kingdoms at the back of each claimant, for the schism was chiefly of a political nature. It would be idle to deny that the unity of the Church was thus seriously jeopardized, or that it required a supreme effort to overcome the difficulty. How far the principal leaders acted in good faith God alone knows; but the good faith of their flocks was never doubted, there were even saints among both parties. Had the division been prolonged, it would no doubt have led to a disruption; but fortunately it did not last long enough to disintegrate any considerable portion of the Church, and it would have been of much shorter duration had the first steps towards a settlement not been half-measures. It was a solemn warning, which fell as seed on good ground, for the next (and last) schismatic current proved from the beginning abortive.

Yet the very fact of there being at one and the

same time two claimants to the papacy, each with his own following, powerfully stirred up the whole Church, and confirmed the unalterable truth that unity is not merely a desirable quality but a necessity: that the sin of those who help to break it up is just as great as that of heretics who undermine the faith. At a time when the Church appeared to be in the greatest danger of splitting up, the voice of Christendom was louder than ever in clamouring for unity, and condemning the ambition of those who brought about the division. The rock of Peter was fiercely assaulted, but it did not give way.

Saint Augustine frequently speaks of the sin of heretics and schismatics who endeavour to undermine the visible unity of the Catholic Church. The following passage, from his explanation of Psalm liv, is specially to the point, *In multis erant mecum*—"In many things they agreed with me" (v. 19). These words, which form the text of his discourse, are now differently translated, but the argument remains, of course, unchanged. "In this verse," he says, "there are two senses. In many things they agree with me. We both have baptism: in this they agree with me. We have been reading the Gospel: in this we agree again; we have been celebrating the feasts of the martyrs: once more they agree; we have kept Easter: again they agree. But they do not agree in everything. In their schism they do not agree, neither in their heresy. In many things they do agree, in a few they do not. But on account of these few things the many in which they do agree do not profit them. Only see, brethren,

how many things the apostle Paul enumerates; but, he says, if one thing be wanting, the many things are quite useless. *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if I have all prophecy, and all faith and all knowledge, if I remove mountains, if I distribute all my goods to the poor, if I deliver my body to be burned.* How many things he mentions! But let one thing be absent from so many, Charity: the former are greater in number, the latter in weight. Thus, in all the sacraments they agree with me, only in charity they do not agree. Again, in another sense, in many things they agree with me. Those who have separated themselves from me were once with me, not only in a few things but in many. Are there not in the entire world but few grains of corn compared to all the straw? Now, what does he mean? They agree with me like the straw, not like the corn. Straw and corn agree in many things: they spring from the same seed, they are rooted in the same soil, they are nourished by the same rain, they are cut by the same sickle, they are threshed upon the same floor, they are winnowed together, but they are not garnered in the same barn. In many things, indeed, they do agree." This is addressed to the Donatists, as well as the following passage taken from the same chapter: "There is no change with them. We see them and there is no change with them, for they die in their error, in their schism, because there is no change with them. They do not improve, rather the reverse, both here and hereafter. We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed. Why not? Because there is no change with them, they feared not



God. My brethren, there remains one remedy: let them fear God and give up Donatus. If you say to them, 'You will perish in heresy, in schism; it must needs be that God punishes those evils; you will lose your soul, do not cajole yourself with fine words, do not follow a blind leader; for if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit.' 'What is that to me?' he answers; 'as I have lived yesterday, so shall I live to-day; I am only what my parents were before me.' This is not to fear God, or to give God the honour. Let him think that what has been read is true, for it is the faith of Christ which cannot be erroneous. How, then, can he remain in heresy when the holy Catholic Church is so evident, since God hath spread it over the whole world; which, previous to spreading it, He promised and foretold, and finally established even as He had promised? Therefore let those who do not fear God beware and be on their guard. For *He hath stretched forth His hand to repay.*"\*

Saint Augustine is more direct, more outspoken, more personal than we should venture to be, but he is surely not mistaken.

In the foregoing sketch we have endeavoured to place before our readers the reasons which compel us to consider visible unity as one of the distinguishing marks of the true Church founded by Jesus Christ. The words of our Lord are perfectly clear, and the Fathers of the Church have unhesitatingly accepted them in their obvious meaning. The lessons we learn from history point the same way, and a moment's

\* Enarr. in Ps. liv, 19, 20.

reflection shows that the very idea of a Church as God's kingdom upon earth, stands or falls with the visible unity of that kingdom. The enemies of the Church have not been slow to recognize this mark, but, strange to say, thousands of earnest seekers after truth and peace have been less successful. The foregoing pages are addressed to these, in the hope that, in spite of all the imperfections attaching to a rapid sketch, they may suggest that kind of thought which leads to action.

BENEDICT ZIMMERMANN, O.D.C.

## CHAPTER III

## The Sanctity of the Church

AS we look upon the character of Jesus Christ presented to us in the Gospel and recorded in the hearts of men, we cannot fail to be impressed by its supreme and sublime holiness. No enemy of His has ever yet had the courage to take up His challenge, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" or to point to any act or word of His as falling short of the highest conception that man is able to form of perfect justice. Persons who reject His divinity, who think that He was mistaken or deluded in His claims, who attribute the success of the divine society that He founded to a coincidence of circumstances, have never yet dared to attribute to Him the mysterious quality that the world itself is forced to recognize, and has agreed to call "sin." Whether we contemplate Jesus Christ standing in the glare of His accusers' eyes—that would surely detect a flaw, were there any to be detected—or alone among His friends when the stain of publicity was withdrawn, at a time when most men are less on their guard, we cannot fail to recognize that here, at any rate, stands a man who mirrors as none other has ever mirrored the supreme characteristic of Almighty God as revealed to men in their moments of highest illumination, and as rendered in words by the song of the angels before the throne, "Holy, Holy, Holy,

Lord God Almighty." He who was sinlessly conceived by the Holy Ghost of a woman herself conceived without sin, and prepared for her unique destiny by a special act of Providence; upon whom the Baptist saw the same Spirit of Holiness descending and abiding; who promised once more to send upon His disciples the same Holy Ghost, so soon as He should be ascended to His Father; who "showed us the Father" in His own human life—this Man holds up before us the very holiness and perfection of Almighty God Himself shining through a human nature that was adequate to its task by reason of its own flawless perfection.

But holiness is something very much larger than morality, though it is common to hear the two terms used as if they were interchangeable. The word "moral" can scarcely be applied to our blessed Lord without a sort of insolence; the word "holy" comes naturally to our lips when we speak of Him. Morality in human life is certainly one of the fruits of holiness, and manifests its power; but the fact that the word "holiness" can be applied to non-moral things shows the greater largeness of its range. A place, a book, a name, a rite may be properly called holy, and that not only in the sense of something dedicated to God; a priest has received an indelible character in virtue of his ordination, and retains it however much he may have been unfaithful to his own vows and his Master's service. And perhaps it is not completely fanciful to think that something of the same indefinable mark of holiness rests even upon communi-

ties and countries where morality may have sunk to a low ebb. There seems in them a supernatural air in spite of widespread worldliness, a spiritual vitality that survives sins of the flesh, and the clamour of God's presence co-existing with that of Satan.

Holiness then with regard to created things, in its general sense, is the mysterious quality imprinted upon all that has been brought into union with God, and with regard to the Creator Himself it may be called His "character." It is the white light that is compounded of all His attributes, and it was this that was supremely illustrated by the life of His Incarnate Son. It should follow then that where He is His light should shine before men; that through the features of every soul that is in living union with Him, His features should be visible to those who have the power to see.

There are a hundred mysterious phrases that become luminous when this latter point is considered. "I live now not I: but Christ liveth in me."\* "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."† "Unto them that are called . . . Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."‡ "There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh. For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath delivered me from the law of sin and of death."§ "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."||

These texts, and many others like them, show

\* Gal. ii, 20. † Phil. ii, 5. ‡ 1 Cor. i, 24. § Rom. viii, 1, 2.  
|| Rom. viii, 9.

what our reason, even without them, recognizes, that if Jesus Christ is the highest manifestation of holiness known to men, He is also the one way to the Father which He claimed to be, and that it is by union with Himself alone that we are able to realize our ideal of sanctity; and further that the proposition may be reversed, and that we may say in St Paul's own words quoted above that "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

This necessity of Christian holiness then is plain; it is impossible that an individual or a society should "be in Christ" if it does not manifest the character of Christ in its own. Our Blessed Lord Himself uses the strongest metaphor imaginable to press this home, when He calls Himself the vine and His disciples the branches:\* we cannot distinguish the one from the other. It is the life of the vine that pours through the branches; it is the branches that bear the actual flower and fruit of the vine. St John discusses the mystery in another manner, when he speaks of "the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."† And St Paul further illustrates it when he declares that a man's wife is "his own flesh" and that we are "members of [Christ's] body, of His flesh and of His bones."‡

Since then there is this marvellous identity between Christ and His disciples, a life of holiness is not merely the life of the imitation of Christ; it is far more: it is in a mystical sense the very life of Christ Himself. Works of charity done purely for the love of God are the acts of Jesus Christ; words of truth

\* John xv, 5. † Apoc. xxi, 9. ‡ Eph. v, 29, 30.

spoken by pure lips are dictated by His mind; holy thoughts and aspirations flow from the "spirit that dwelleth in the Son."\* As the priest at the altar is lifted up into a representative union with his Lord, and in virtue of that identity is able to pronounce the words of consecration in Christ's own person, so the soul that is living the life of grace is able to look upon her deeds and merits, to recognize their source, and to give glory to God, who has wrought them in her.

But if holiness is the mark of the individual soul that lives in Christ, it must be far more the mark of the whole divine society that makes up His Body: if one member may be recognized by its radiance, far more must the whole body be full of light. And this is what we mean when we call sanctity a note of the Church. We mean that the Body of Christ, because it is His Body, exhibits His characteristics, and may be known by them; and that pre-eminent among those is His holiness.

The writings of the Fathers are full of such sayings. Many of their arguments are too long to state here; but a few suggestive sentences may be quoted. St Augustine writes: "The Church was taken up from the human race that the very flesh united to the Word might be the head of the Church. . . She was loved while she was impure, that she might not remain impure."† And again in an apostrophe to the Church he writes: "Himself is thy King and thy spouse. Thou art the wife of God thy King, covered by Him, adorned by Him, redeemed by Him, made whole by

\*Rom. viii, 11.

†Aug. in Ps. xlv, 3.



Him. Whatsoever thou hast by which thou mayest please Him, that thou hast from Him.”\* In another passage He discusses what is the nature of her purity: it is not artificial, he says, not that of a whited wall, but “there hath come to thee illuminating and purifying grace. At first thou wert black; but thou hast been made white by His grace. . . . Who is she that ascendeth purified, so fair, so shining, so without spot or wrinkle?”† In yet another writing on the Transfiguration‡ he identifies the shining garments of our Lord with His Church: “His clothing is His Church. For unless clothes are worn by one who puts them on, they fall to the ground: those who touch even the hem of these garments,” he continues, “are healed. And what wonder if the Church be signified through white garments, when ye hear Isaiah the prophet saying, ‘If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow.’”§

St Chrysostom repeats St Augustine’s thought when he says: “Thou seest that the Church hath all things from her Lord. By Him was she made glorious, by Him was she made without spot.”|| The same saint urges the necessity of holiness when he writes: “Let us serve our Head: let us consider of what Head we are the body, to whom all things are subject. By this example we ought to be better than the angels, . . . since we are preferred in honour to them

\* *ibid.* 26. † In Ps. ciii Serm. 1, 6.

‡ Matt. xvii, 1-8, Serm. lxxviii, 2.

§ I must express my gratitude to Dom John Chapman, O.S.B., for much help in these patristic references.

|| S. Aug. in Ep. ad Eph. cap v, hom. xx.

all.”\* Finally St Cyril writes of the Church that in her “God hath placed first apostles, then prophets, . . . every kind of virtue, I mean wisdom and understanding, temperance and justice, mercy and humanity, insuperable patience in persecutions.”†

The words of our Blessed Lord too enforce the same lesson. He holds an ideal to which it would be incredibly presumptuous for men to aspire, were it not for His own gracious presence within them, when He bids His disciples be perfect, as also “their heavenly Father is perfect.”‡ In the same discourse He preaches a sanctity which ever since has been the despair and the wonder of a world that does not know His power; and above all He expressly states that love, which is one of the brightest aspects of holiness, is the mark by which His disciples shall be recognized, when He declares: “By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.”§ St Peter urges the same point, declaring that the holiness of Jesus Christ is both the source and example of the holiness of His members: “According to Him that hath called you, who is holy, be you also in all manner of conversation holy, because it is written: ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”|| And St John expounds the same truth from the other side, showing how the sinless character of God is communicated to His children, when he writes, “Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin.”¶

With this conception of holiness in our mind, as

\* *ibid.* cap. 1, hom. iii. † S. Cyr. c. 1, xviii, 27. ‡ Matt. v, 48.  
§ John xiii, 35. || 1 Pet. i, 15, 16. ¶ 1 John iii, 9.

being the character of God manifested in human action and supremely in His Church, we can approach our main subject and consider it as it presents itself to us in the life of that Church which is Christ's mystical body.

There is no department of life in which holiness does not play its part, for "nothing is secular but sin"; and it would be an endless task to follow it in all its developments, and still more hopeless to attempt to trace it through the bewildering contradictions of statistics in its department of morality; it would be of little service to say that Ireland is pure, England truthful and Spain chivalrous. We must deal with it in a larger way; and for that purpose we may discuss it under four general heads, which, however, can only be touched upon very briefly within the limits of this essay, namely (1) personal influence; (2) charity; (3) love of suffering; (4) its miraculous effects.

1. Personal influence.—The Power of holiness, like all great qualities, defies definition, but it is none the less a very positive thing. It is one of the qualities that the world universally recognizes and to which it pays homage. The sinner who does not mean to amend may seek to defend himself from it by avoiding its neighbourhood or by scoffing at it; the sinner who is beginning to turn to God may be drawn to it, and seek out God's purest servants, knowing that he will find in them the sympathy that the world refuses; but the sinner, whatever his state, acknowledges it no less than the saint; deep calls to deep: the depth of sin

to the depth of holiness. Again and again in history the world, weary of its own treachery and self-seeking, turns to a saint of God as the resolver of its problems; a simple girl from a small Italian town cuts a knot over which the wisest heads have puzzled; English mechanics, mad with disputing, lay their affairs in the hands of a holy priest whose religion they despise, but whose sanctity and purity of motive they reverence. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb; . . . and a little child shall lead them."\*

It was this power out of all the inexhaustible and infinite depths of the divine nature that the incarnate Son of God chose to use and exhibit as His credential to speak with God's authority, and as the magnetism by which He drew all men to Himself. He veiled the fathomless wisdom that He possessed, the eternity in which He lived, the might by which He created and sustained the world. He refused to compel men to submit to His rule by an overwhelming display of His omnipotence; but He allowed at every moment of His earthly life His serene and stainless holiness to shine out in His actions, His words and His presence; and by that power drew men to do that to which He would not drive them. It was this at which the devils trembled. "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee? . . . I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God."† It was this that brought the young man with his eager aspirations running and kneeling, "Good master, what shall I do that I may receive life everlasting?"‡ It is this that still makes the

\*Isa. xi, 6.

†Luke iv, 34.

‡Mark x, 17.

rebellious to tremble, the miserable to seek mercy and the aspiring strength, the power of God's holiness.

It is this same strange power that is exercised to-day by the divine society which our Blessed Lord founded. Men who profess to explain away her claims, who detest her ceremonies, and who repudiate her authority are silent before the strength of her holiness. The best that they can do for their cause is to nickname it "glamour"; but they are forced to acknowledge its existence. They are hushed when they enter her churches, although they deny the Presence that gives them their sanctity; they quote St Paul against "praying in an unknown tongue,"\* but they are curiously affected when they turn over a Missal; they repudiate apostolic succession, but they show an odd mingling of reverence and inquisitiveness when they meet a priest. And again and again those of them that at last receive the gift of faith and become her children, acknowledge that the motive that first began to draw them towards her borders was not the arguments of her theologians or the passion of her preachers, but this same strange radiance of holiness that shone in her poor little sanctuaries as well as in her cathedrals, in the sacred character of even her least worthy ministers as well as in those of her most spiritual servants, in her most unintelligible rites as well as in the transparent simplicity of her Gospel.

2. Charity.—It is roughly true to say that the Old Testament reveals God as a God of holiness, and the New Testament as a God of love. They are two

\* I Cor. xiv, 13, 14.

aspects of the same divine character. Holiness seeks to propagate itself, becoming love as it does so, and cries out, "Be holy, for I am holy."\* If it was the holiness of Jesus Christ that drew men to Him, that broke down the Magdalene at His feet and the thief on the cross, it was His holiness also that drew Him to them, and caused Him to send out His disciples to heal men's physical infirmities and to supply their spiritual needs. It was to call "a kingly priesthood, a holy nation" to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled,"† that the holy God came down from heaven; it was because "this man [had] done no evil,"‡ that He yearned with such a unique passion for the souls of sinners; because He was a "high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners,"§ that "by the Holy Ghost [He] offered Himself unspotted unto God" on behalf of sinners.

It is this same charity of holiness that burns at the heart of the Catholic Church to-day. Because she is herself holy, she desires the perfection of all men; and this is the secret of her innumerable works of mercy, corporal and spiritual. It is practically true to say that charity, as we know it now, had no dwelling in this world until the holy God "was made flesh and dwelt among us,"|| and it is equally true to say that so long as He is present in His mystical body, charity will not fail. Nothing else but this will explain her extraordinary activity on behalf of souls, her endless efforts to gather men into her arms, and her un-

\* Lev. xi, 44.

† 1 Peter ii, 9; i, 4.

‡ Luke xxiii, 41.

§ Heb. vii, 27.

|| John i, 14.

tiring patience to keep them and nourish them there. Both her proselytism and her elaborate system of sanctification are her reproach in the world; but to those who recognize her character they are its strongest witnesses. It is because she is so vividly conscious of her own holiness and of the unique presence of God within her that she cannot rest content with what she has, and is for ever "spreading out her hands all the day to an unbelieving people."\* The explanation of her zeal lies in her holiness.

3. Love of suffering.—The same passion for holiness that causes the Church to struggle for souls causes her also to suffer for souls. The road back from sin is through pain; it was this road that our sinless Saviour trod, and it is this road that He still treads to-day in the person of His Church. This again is the secret of the asceticism which is one of her reproaches in the eyes of the world. Men who do not understand what holiness is are for ever sneering at the lives of those who have separated themselves in religious houses that they may purify themselves; but to those who take the trouble to observe and think, it is in the religious life that the mark of holiness is most plainly visible. Here are communities of men and women who have devoted themselves wholly, body and soul, to the production of sanctity; and though in no sense have they a monopoly of the "light which enlighteneth every man,"† yet they are its most evidently confessed adherents. In their communities there are gathered up and focussed rays of the light

\* Isa. lxxv, 2.

† John i, 9.



that streams from the throne of the holy God, and from them flow out those same rays translated into terms of human life, as lights of the world too in their measure. Of course the brightest heart of that light is hidden in the cell and the cloisters, but enough escapes through the windows to show men who have eyes to see that God is still dwelling with men, and illuminating His Church with His own holiness.

In the lives of the great saints, whether within or without the cloister, this quality is very visible. As has been pointed out already, it is something much greater than morality. Holiness is to morality what genius is to talent; it at once includes and transcends it. There are thousands of souls who are moral—who, so far as it is possible for man to see, never deliberately choose to live or act contrary to the will of God as they understand it—but whom it would be ludicrous to compare to St Francis, who embraced poverty as his bride, or to St Theresa, who cried that it was better to die than not to suffer. They are talented but not inspired; they are warm and bright with grace, but there is no blinding, melting radiance of sorrow and love.

Again, a great part of the process in the production of this holiness lies, as we have seen, in suffering. Pain is the weight which uplifts the balance that has been depressed by sin; and it is by the deliberate and intelligent welcome of pain that devoted souls, experienced in God's secret, seek to make themselves holy, as He is holy. This is so obvious a truth to those who have any conception of what the passion of Jesus Christ means

that it is hard to understand how a professing Christian can question it.

But this is not all. It is not only for their own purification that such souls do penance, but for that of the careless and self-indulgent world. Just as their other good deeds are mystically the acts of Jesus Christ; as the Mass is in a sense identical with Calvary; as God forgives sin through the lips of His priests; so the sufferings of His servants are also His. The passion that atoned once for all for the sins of the world is re-enacted no less in the penance that souls in union with Him inflict upon themselves, than in the sacrifice of the Mass, though of course in quite another sense. Their souls suffer then, or rather their Lord suffers in them, in order to win for the world the holiness that it does not yet appreciate. The discipline and the hair shirt are no less "instruments of the passion" than the actual scourge and nails that shed the sinless blood of the Lamb of God, "cleansing us from all sin."\* "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed."†

4. The miraculous effects of holiness.—It was promised by our Blessed Lord on more than one occasion that miracles should be wrought by His servants, after as well as before His Ascension; that something of His own power over nature should be exercised by those in whom was His Spirit. "Signs shall follow them that believe," He said to His Apostles in His last farewell. "In My name shall they cast out devils. . . . If they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not

\* 1 John i, 7.

† Isa. liii, 5.

hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.”\* “Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than those shall he do.”† And the history of the Catholic Church is full of the literal accomplishments of these promises. There is scarcely one eminent servant of God to whom such powers were not attributed; and the fact is so universally recognized that at least two instances of such undoubted miraculous effects are needed in every case where it is proposed to add any name to the roll of the canonized. With our Lord’s own express words in view, it is astonishing that it is necessary even to seem to apologize for the faith of Catholics with regard to this matter. Particular tales of such powers may have been too quickly accepted as authentic; it would be remarkable if it were not so when we consider the vastness of the Catholic Church, her inclusion of every sort of mind, and the firm faith of her children as regards the possession of miraculous powers on the part of holy persons; but the principle itself surely needs no apology. In fact those who deny such a continued fulfilment of the words of Jesus Christ, and who at the same time acknowledge Him as their divine Master, are sorely put to it to explain away what they believe to be the cessation of such powers. Catholics, however, have no such difficulty: for them it is evident that our Lord’s promise is to be taken in the simple sense of the words, and they find its abundant fulfilment in the lives of the saints.

\* Mark xvi, 17, 18.

† John xiv, 12.

It is to be noticed too how soberly practical is the Church in her treatment of those instances that are submitted for her sanction. The miracles of her servants do not form just a body of folk-lore stories told in the twilight, half-believed and tenderly doubted; but they are subjected to the severest scrutiny before they can be accepted as evidences of sanctity. The court that deals with them does so in the spirit in which the Congregation of the Propaganda does business with missionary statistics, or another court with financial affairs: the statements are sifted, scanned, doubted and argued against, with as much fervour as matters of politics or architecture.

Let those who doubt them, and who yet claim to be regarded as Christians, ask themselves which position needs the greater credulity: whether of those who accept our Lord's clear promises in the simple sense of the words and find their accomplishment in every century and country; or of those who maintain that in spite of what He said, in spite of what the vast majority of Christians have always believed with regard to the interpretation of His words, yet the whole matter is a delusion, that the legal processes of the courts of canonization are a puerile farce, and that holy persons who are beyond question living in an extraordinary nearness to the Creator, have no powers over the works of His hands beyond those that a Hottentot or an irreligious stockbroker might possess.

Holiness then, no less than unity, must be one of the marks by which the Church of Jesus Christ, indwelt by His personality and inspired by His

Spirit, may be recognized: and it is not hard to apply the test. There is only one united body of Christians which possesses these credentials in a visible and coherent form. While we recognize, with thankfulness for God's generosity, overflowing as it does the banks of His covenant, the personal piety of many souls who do not adhere to the Catholic Church, yet it is impossible to be misled into thinking that any communion but that presided over by the successor of St Peter can claim the mark of holiness in a clear and unmistakable way. We find in no other communion a steady stream of saints such as that which flows from her, saints whose genius for God and divine things is acknowledged on all sides to transcend all ordinary morality, as the music of Bach transcends that of a street musician. It is hideous to compare the two, though they share the same gifts. Again, we do not find that strange, unwilling homage paid to any sanctuaries or persons but those that are devoted to the service of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar; or the witness of charity as manifested in missionary zeal in any other body but that which claims a world-wide jurisdiction; or the passion of suffering, intelligently recognized and directed, in any other centres but in those religious houses which the Catholic Church regards as the strongholds of her warfare; or claims to a continuous possession of the miraculous powers promised by the Founder of the Church to them that believe, or organized courts for the sifting and establishment of reputed instances of their exercise, elsewhere but within her borders.

It is possible, no doubt, to find here and there outside persons who possess in a remarkable manner some of the signs by which holiness may be recognized. An Anglican of one age possesses great personal influence; a Moravian, a great missionary zeal; a Greek Christian, an ascetic habit of life; a Russian priest, miraculous powers. It would be strange if it were not so, in view of the ardent sincerity of many non-Catholics and the liberality of God's princely spirit; but in no body of Christians can all those signs of holiness be so evidently and continuously observed. We may go further and gladly acknowledge that many other societies, not only individuals, are remarkable for their possession of one or other of those signs; but in others they are lacking. The English Nonconformists have no "glamour" and less asceticism, they would think them scarcely respectable; the Greeks are without missionary fervour, and make no serious efforts to push that claim to unique orthodoxy; and a court of canonization is not yet to be found among the numerous activities of the Church of England.

There is only one society that is not afraid to lay claim to holiness with *all* its consequences and responsibilities, and which impresses the world by her possession of it; which does not shrink from the world's enmity in the urging of her exclusive rights; or from its derision in her pursuit of the highest sanctity in the religious life; or from its contempt in the exercise of the supernatural powers that eminent holiness alone confers. Of her alone can it be said that she is holy as her Lord is holy.

R. HUGH BENSON, M.A.

## CHAPTER IV

## The Catholicity of the Church

§I—*The Name of Catholic*

THE "Notes" of the Church are commonly given in the words of the Creed—One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. By a "note" of anything is, of course, meant a sign by which it is recognized and distinguished from all else. The most essential qualities of a thing are not necessarily or usually its notes. These may be unimportant in themselves, but yet important as distinctive marks. The genius of Michael Angelo was more important than the shape of his nose, yet it was by his broken nose and not by his genius that he was recognized by his friends in the street. It cannot be a note of the Church that it is the infallible teacher of truth or the mystical body of Christ. But Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, Apostolicity are plain and visible facts which anyone can recognize, and these are "notes."

Of these four signs Catholicity is the chief. Other sects may exhibit unity by agreement as to their tenets or compactness in their organization. All Christians ought to possess means unknown to others for the attainment of sanctity. Heretics and schismatics may retain apostolicity in a material sense, as the Donatists, for instance, occupied the Catholic sees in Africa with unbroken succession from Catholic prelates. But only



one Church has ever been able to make any claim to the name of Catholic, and that one Church has been Catholic both in name and fact since the days of Pentecost.

Only one Church has ever been able to make the claim; this is strictly true. All heresies and schisms have attempted, though without success, to arrogate to themselves the name of Catholic, and by this attempt have given united and irresistible testimony to its significance. But they tried only to be called Catholic, not to be so. Arianism, when it had failed to corrupt the Church and had been cut off from unity, became merely the creed of certain nations. The earlier heresies subsided into small and scattered communities. Later, the Nestorians of Persia, the Jacobites of Egypt, however numerous, were local sects. The Greek schismatic body, after centuries of intermittent division, may be looked upon as having been permanently divided from Catholicity—at least, from the fall of Constantinople, and ever since that time its fecundity has ceased. Claiming still to be the universal Church, it has not only lost the name of Catholic, but has even contentedly relapsed into the position of a local schism, making no effort to bring all the world into its unity.

All these older divided communions have retained the Catholic claim to embrace the heathen for their inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for their possession. So, once, Mohammedanism demanded the allegiance of all mankind, and so have other false religions, in theory, pretended to universality. But there is a painful parallel in this point between the

pagans and the Christian sects. The note of life is wanting in each case ; they claim, but they make no effort to realize their claim. The note of fecundity is wanting ; they do not grow ; they have no children. The vigour of faith is not a fire in them which burns them till they can teach others to believe. By their own witness they are bound to go forth and convert all men, yet they stay at home and anathematize those to whom they do not care to preach.

With the various forms of Protestantism which arose in and since the days of Luther and Calvin the case is otherwise. Not only did some of them at first propagate their new opinions by violent means, but they have never ceased their missionary efforts until the present day. It is true that energy of race may have something to do with this, since the Germans and Dutch and Scandinavians make but a feeble exhibition in the history of missionary enterprise in comparison with the more venturesome British. The latter have also had more money to spend, and it is pathetic to read of the millions that have been generously subscribed with such mediocre results. The desire for the conversion of the heathen—or in some cases even of Catholics—has been sincere, fervent and admirable.

But this energy has been strangely disconnected from any claim to Catholicity. The older sects, who have declared themselves to be each the whole Church, have been satisfied to have no missions. The newer communities, which lavishly if unfruitfully pay their missionaries to convert the world, do not claim to be

the universal Church. Each, at most, entitles itself a part, even though it anathematizes all the other parts.

One Church, nevertheless, exists which is not a mere national religion. This Church claims to be Catholic, and her sons are indeed throughout the world. She anathematizes all heresies, but seeks to convert all heretics. She does not sit satisfied with even her unparalleled conquests of past ages, but unrestingly labours for new victories, sending out her missionaries—not with wife and children, £350 a year, and a house—but as apostles and martyrs, missionaries who work, missionaries who convert, missionaries who die in harness. One such Church exists; and if one such did not exist, it would be harder to declare that the Christian religion is divine. Her history lies open before the world, an unbroken chain. Her credentials are manifest. Her children are as numerous as the whole Babel of discordant sects. One—if any Church is one—in faith, in discipline, in intercommunion; Holy in her saints, Apostolic in her hoary antiquity; Catholic in fact as Catholic in name.

It is clear, therefore, why Catholicity is a note of the Church. It is because, as a matter of fact, there is only one Church among the Churches which is universal, only one which has at any time been universal.

As a matter of fact this is so. Is it, then, a mere accident, or was it necessary that it should be so, and should have been so? Is it not possible that some phase of error should have crept like an ill-omened shade over the chief part of Christendom? Though, on the

whole, religions have spread by the truth they contain, and not by reason of their errors but in spite of them, may there not be exceptions, and must we not hesitate to conclude that the largest and most active community of Christians is therefore the truest? Given that one Church alone is fully and admittedly Catholic, is it of necessity the one Church of Christ? The reply is a plain one.

The Christian religion was begun with a mandate to be obeyed, a character to be realized, together with a promise to be fulfilled: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."\* This is the mandate: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." This is a note of the Church's character—exclusiveness. "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Here is the promise. Was the command over-bold? Was the threat an idle boast? Was the promise in vain? The answer cannot be doubtful if we accept the truth of the following verse: "And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God." Every Christian who repeats the Apostles' Creed confesses this truth, that Jesus who suffered and died is now seated on the right hand of the Majesty of God, from henceforth awaiting that His

\* Mark xvi, 15 seq.

enemies be made His footstool. For how long was the command to be obeyed, for how long was the promise to stand good? "Go, and make disciples of all nations," He said, "and lo, I am with you all days even until the consummation of the world."\* Till then the preaching without a stop, till then the signs of His presence, that is, until the end of all things.

"Where, then," is our question, "where are the world-wide preaching, the narrow doctrine, the following signs?" We saw, and it seemed a mere matter of fact, a chance, an accident, though it was the fulfilment of a promise and an inner necessity—we saw one Church that had preached the Gospel as far as she could to every creature, bearing an exclusive message, and signed with the miracles of the Son of God. At Pentecost the signs began, and twelve years after Pentecost, † the preaching began, "*in omnem terram exiit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terræ verba eorum.*" ‡ "And they," continues the evangelist, § "going forth, preached everywhere, the Lord confirming the word with the signs that followed," and not only in that first age but ever since. As long as the command endures, so long is the promise valid, and so long is seen its fulfilment by Him to whom has been given all power in heaven and on earth. || "And unto all nations the Gospel must be preached." ¶ The end, therefore, is not yet.

In the Acts of the Apostles are recounted the signs which followed: "And fear came upon every soul;

\*Matt. xxvi, 19, 20.

†Rom. x, 18.

‡Ps. xviii, 5.

§ Mark xvi, 20.

||Matt. xxviii, 18. ¶ Mark. xiii, 10.

many wonders also and signs were done by the apostles in Jerusalem, and there was great fear in all,"\* for the Apostles asked no less than they had been told to expect. "Grant unto thy servants," they cry, "that with all confidence they may speak Thy word, by stretching forth Thy hand to signs and wonders, to be done in the name of Thy holy Son Jesus."† Let us hear the answer to the prayer: "And the multitude of men and women who believed in the Lord was the more increased, insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at the least might overshadow any one of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities."‡ Such scenes took place in the streets of the city which had lately crucified its King. And Stephen, too, did "great signs and wonders," and Philip, the deacon, so that the magician Simon, "being astonished, wondered to see the signs and exceeding great miracles which were done."§ If St Paul wishes to prove that he was sent by Jesus Christ, he appeals to the promise fulfilled, the signs following: "The signs of my apostleship have been wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds."|| What these were let St Luke tell us: "And God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles: so that even there were brought from his body to the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the

\* Acts ii, 43. † Acts iv, 29, 30. ‡ Acts v, 15.

§ Acts vi, 8; vii, 13; cf. ix, 35-42; x, 45, 6; xiii, 12, etc., etc.

|| 2 Cor. xii, 12.

diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them.”\* “And he shaking off the beast into the fire, suffered no harm.” “All that had diseases in the island came, and were healed.”† Such was the preaching of those who first went forth in the name of Christ, “God bearing them witness by signs and wonders and divers miracles and distributions of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will.”‡

If the preaching of the apostles needed this confirmation, how much more the preaching of those who came later? The command and the promise still held good, the word was preached everywhere, the signs still followed. From the earliest ecclesiastical writers to the present day the testimony is persistent that miracles have continued in the Church. Papias, a disciple of St John, related the miracles done in his own day.§ St Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with a Jew, the report of a conversation held about 130-3, repeatedly alleges the miracles of his time.|| So also in the same century Irenæus, Apollonius, Tertullian, amongst others.¶ From that time onward the fact is admitted, that the Fathers appeal constantly to the evidence of contemporary miracles. I will simply refer to such extraordinary works as the life of St Gregory

\* Acts xix, 12.

† Acts xxviii, 5, 9.

‡ Heb. ii, 4.

§ Euseb. H.E. iii, 39.

|| He mentions *δυναμίεις*, prophetic gifts, healing, casting out of evil spirits, Dial. c. Tryph. 30, 35, 39, 76, 82, 85, 88. See also his account of the casting out of devils by Christians at Rome, Apol. ii, 6.

¶ St Irenæus appeals to casting out of devils, prophecy, visions, healing of the sick, raising (frequently) of the dead, ii, 31, 2; 32, 4; v, 6, 1; cf. Euseb. H.E. v, 7; Tertullian.



“the wonderworker” (210-270) by St Gregory of Nyssa, that of St Anthony by St Athanasius, St Augustine’s *City of God*, and the *Dialogues* of St Gregory the Great, four books for four centuries.\* Let us hear the Apostle of England describe the conversion of our country :

For the words of these same holy preachers *are by no means sufficient for persuasion*, unless miracles be added; which thing by the help of God we now see. For Almighty God, through the brilliancy of the miracles of preachers, has brought to the faith even the ends of the world. Behold, He has now penetrated the hearts of almost all the nations; behold, He has united in one faith the limit of east and of west. Behold, the tongue of Britain, which knew naught but barbarous gnashing, has already begun to re-echo the Hebrew Alleluia in the praises of God. Behold, this once swelling ocean is now reduced to service beneath the feet of the saints, and its savage risings, which the rulers of this world were unable to subdue by the sword, are restrained with simple words by the mouths of priests, and he who in infidelity feared not the throngs of battle, now that he is faithful fears the tongues of the humble. For because by the reception of the words from heaven and by the brightness of miracles the power of divine knowledge is poured upon him, he is bridled by the terror of this same Godhead, so that he is afraid to do

\* The first of these works is a dialogue of marvels, the most famous of which is the moving of a mountain. The life of St Anthony is no longer withheld from St Athanasius by the best critics; see Dom Butler, *The Lausiac Hist. of Palladius*, vol. II, pp. x-xi. In the *De Civitate Dei*, xxii, 8, 9, St Augustine relates a long string of miracles for which he vouches. The numberless miracles in St Gregory’s *Dialogues* (of which the second book is the well-known life of St Benedict) are related chiefly from the immediate testimony of eyewitnesses.

wickedly, and with all his heart desires to come to the grace of eternal life.

In the same way has the promise of Christ been fulfilled in the conversion of each nation, and the story of miraculous gifts is repeated in the life of each Apostle. What is told of Peter and Stephen and Paul is repeated of Augustine and Patrick and Columba, and Boniface and Ansgar and the rest, and is still more marvellous in the apostle of the Far East, Francis Xavier. Within the bounds of Christendom everywhere miracles have continued. Perhaps the most extraordinary book of wonders ever written is the sixth book of the contemporary life of St Bernard, the *Liber Miraculorum*, in which his companions—a bishop and his chaplain, two abbots and some monks—recount alternately the cures performed day by day in St Bernard's journey through Germany. When St Vincent Ferrer, in his travels throughout Europe, had finished his sermon every day, a bell was rung for the sick to come and be healed. I mention remarkable instances; the sixty-four folio volumes of *Acta Sanctorum* will supply plenty more. Thaumaturgi have not been wanting to the nineteenth century, and if I only mention the Curé d'Ars and Don Bosco, it is because prudence does not encourage us to proclaim what the voice of the Church has not yet approved. But there is abundance of miracles besides the famous cures of Lourdes as signs in the incredulous modern world.

Such are the means by which Christ made his Church Catholic, and by which He has kept her Catholic. She is the synthesis of all these miracles,

herself in consequence the miracle of miracles, God's standing miracle through the centuries. Nothing less could have fashioned her and wrought her preservation and her increase than the divine means: the inspired preaching, the Lord working withal with signs following. The whole process is summed up when we name the result, the Catholic Church.

This name, therefore, tells of a command obeyed, a character realized, a promise fulfilled during nineteen hundred years, and it necessarily names the Church which is from the Apostles; the Church of the saints, the Church so at unity with herself "that the world may know" who sent Him that sent her.

Catholicity we see to be not merely a note, but the chief note of the Church. It describes her as she is seen to be. It is the easiest and the most certain test to apply, the simplest criterion of the truth. God sent His Son to redeem the world; the Christ, the Son of God, founded a world-wide society to diffuse and guard the revelation He made to men, and to be the dispenser of the grace He won by His death. Where then—this is the only question to be asked by the inquirer—where is that divine society, wide as the world to be saved, wide as the love of God to men?

The answer does not come only from within the Church, but, as St Augustine says, "from the confession of the human race."\* It comes not from one place or from one age, but from every age and every place since the Church began. "Catholic" is not merely an essential quality and a note, but it is a

\* *De Utilitate Credendi*, xvii, 35.

proper name, and pagans and heretics alike confess where is this one world-wide, historic, divine society when they name it by its name. For "even heretics and schismatics when they speak, not with each other but with outsiders, call the Catholic Church nothing else but the Catholic Church. For they cannot be understood unless they distinguish her by the name with which she is designated by the whole world."\* Every heretic necessarily desires to retain for himself the name "Catholic" which he repeats in the Creed, and none can like to be called after Marcion or Arius, or Luther or Wesley or Swedenborg or Irving, instead of Christ.†

\* St Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, 12.

† The ancient heresies invented nicknames for Catholics, which not only did not stick, but were not comprehensible. St Pacian mentions some invented by the Novatians: *Apostaticum*, *Capitolinum*, *Syndreum*, adding that he hears them for the first time (Eph. ii, 3). On this St Augustine says: "It is enough for seekers that there is one Catholic Church, to which the heresies give different names, while each of them is called by its own proper designation, which they dare not deny. From which we may understand by the judgement of arbiters, who are prejudiced by no preference, to which communion the name of Catholic which all claim is to be applied" (*De Util. Cred.* vii, 19). This has all passed away. It is as rare now as it was common in St Augustine's day for any one to affect to refuse its name to the Catholic Church, although claiming the same appellation, and such a refusal would only seem a ludicrous paradox. There is a curious and to me inexplicable habit among some Anglicans which demands mention. They use the word "Catholic" to designate a certain party within their own communion. This is at first sight a strange misapplication of a word which means universal. It is evident, however, that they really mean that this party borrows many doctrines from Catholicism. But the astonishing point is that this use of the word appears to deny it to the rest of their own Church, and I have consequently never been able to comprehend how they can employ so unfortunate an expression.

“For never did the [Christian] people take its name from its own bishops, but only from the Lord, in whom we have faith. Though the blessed apostles were our teachers and ministered to us the Gospel of the Saviour, we were not called after them, but we both are and are called Christians after Christ. But they who have from others the beginning of what they consider to be faith, rightly are called also by their name as being their possession.\* As in these cases the name of another teacher is substituted for that of Christ, so in other cases it is the name of a certain place which is substituted for Catholic, as Cataphrygian, or Macedonian, or Greek, or Copt, or Vaudois, or Moravian, or Anglican, or a certain doctrine which is singled out in contradistinction to the unity of the apostolic faith, as Monarchian, Patripassian, Anabaptist, Supralapsarian and Sublapsarian, “Orthodox,” “Catholic Apostolic,” Protestant, Reformed, Congregationalist, and so on (see *Whittaker’s Almanack*). Some of these names are imposed by enemies, some—it is easy to see which—are self-chosen. But there is only one Catholic Church.†

\* St Athanasius, *Oratio* 1 c. Arianos.

† The present writer was once a deacon of another Church which does not bear the name of Catholic. He was accosted one day outside the open door of the large building in which he ministered, by a woman in black who seemed in some distress. “Is this a Catholic church?” she asked. “What a fool she will think me, and how unkind, if I begin to explain about continuity and Henry VIII and Elizabeth!” the curate thought to himself, and replied roundly, “No, it is not.” The young man went away sorrowful (for he had many possessions better than riches which might have to be left), pondering on words he knew only too well. “When a stranger asks where the Catholic church is,

“But the name of Catholic is not in the Bible.” I grant it, and I add that it is not in the earliest form of the Creed. It is first found in St Ignatius, c. A.D. 107, and thereafter continually. To the objection itself we may reply in words which St Pacian of Barcelona wrote in the fourth century: “No one, you will say, was called Catholic in the days of the Apostles. So be it; I will allow you this point. When after the Apostles heresies arose, and strove to tear into parts under many names the dove of God and the queen, did not the apostolic folk need a surname, by which to distinguish the unity of the uncorrupted people, lest the error of a few should tear limb from limb the unblemished spouse of Christ? Was it not right that the original source (*caput principale*) should be designated by a proper appellative? If by chance I should have entered to-day a populous city, and should have found there Marcionites, Apollinarians, Cataphrygians, Novatians and such-like calling themselves Christians, by what surname should I recognize the congregation of my own people, unless when they were called Catholics?”

### § 2—*Catholic and Roman*

THE ancient game of giving nicknames to the Catholic Church came to an end because they would not stick.

no heretic will venture to point to his own chapel or house” (St Augustine, *c. Ep. Manich. Fundam.* 5); and again, “If you should happen to be in strange cities, do not ask simply where is the *κυριακή* [the Lord’s house], for all the heresies of the impious call their caves *κυριακαί*, nor simply where is the Church, but where is the Catholic Church. For this is the proper name of this holy Church and Mother of us all, who is the bride of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God” (St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* xviii, 26).

But still there remain some people who dislike to use the simple term Catholic without any addition, lest they should seem to condemn themselves. It is extremely remarkable that they can find no other expression to add to the word "Catholic," or to substitute for it, than "Roman" or some equivalent word.\*

Now just as a society without a principle of authority is impossible, so a diffusion throughout the world like that implied in the word "Catholic" would be incoherent, disorganized, fragmentary, without a centre. Catholicity is not a mere formless chaos, without order, without organization, but the enemies of the Church admit, nay, they proclaim, that she has a perfection of constitution unparalleled in human societies or states. How this came about a writer who hates the Catholic Church will tell us: "The proposition 'the Roman Church has always had the primacy' (*Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum*)† and the statement that 'Catholic' virtually means 'Roman Catholic' are gross fictions when devised in honour of the temporary occupant of the Roman see and detached from the significance of the eternal city in profane history; but applied to the Church of the

\* The forms "Papist," "Romanist," "Romish," are recognized now as bad manners. It is hardly necessary, I hope, to point out that "Roman" is never, even by the rudest persons, intended in a sense which excludes "Catholic" by naming only a portion of the world, as with names like Cataphrygian, Macedonian, Moravian, Anglican. "Roman" simply points to the fact of being in communion with the apostolic see.

† These words, found in some MSS. of the canons of Nicæa, were perhaps added during the pontificate of St Damasus in the fourth century.



imperial capital, they contain a truth the denial of which is equivalent to renouncing the attempt to explain the process by which the Church was unified and Catholicized." So Harnack, the most influential of living critics in Germany.\* The words are worth considering. Let us take the main statement by itself:

"The proposition, 'THE ROMAN CHURCH HAS ALWAYS HAD THE PRIMACY, and the statement that 'CATHOLIC' VIRTUALLY MEANS 'ROMAN CATHOLIC,' . . . applied to the Church of the imperial capital, contain a truth the denial of which is equivalent to renouncing the attempt to explain the process by which the Church was unified and Catholicized." This could hardly be put more strongly, and the great critic shows that he feels this truth to be not merely entirely certain but also of paramount importance in the history of the development of Christianity. The great authority on the history of law, Dr Rudolph Sohm, takes a more exaggerated view. The moderate view was supported before Harnack by such first-rate writers as Weiszäcker and Caspari, and it is the accepted view in Germany.† That this has been ignored

\* *Hist. of Dogma*, Eng. tr. vol. II, p. 168.

† Of Sohm, Harnack says: "He estimates the importance of the Roman Church still more highly, in so far as, according to him, she was the exclusive originator of Church law as well as of the Catholic form of Church constitution; and on p. 381 he flatly says: 'The whole Church constitution with its claim to be founded on divine arrangement was first developed in Rome, and then transferred from her to the other communities.' I think this is an exaggeration." Here I agree with Harnack, who mentions another author, Tschirn, whom I have not read, as also exaggerating. Renan takes the same view, but varies as usual in different volumes. The proofs given by Harnack of his position (vol. II, pp. 149, 168)

by controversialists in England is due to the fact of Littledale, Bright, T. T. Carter and Puller not being able to read German.

1. The two propositions, however, must not be "detached from the significance of the Eternal City in profane history"—so Dr Harnack warns us, and he is quite justified in doing so. God uses human means in working out His plans. He might have chosen Nazareth or, if it comes to that, St Helena or Timbuctoo as the see of Peter and the centre of Catholicity. But He elected to appear on earth just at the moment that the Roman world was united for the first time under a single ruler, just at the moment that the children of Abraham, of whose seed He came, had become dispersed throughout the Empire, just at the moment when all the old creeds and philosophies were at a loss, and waiting for new life. As a great general seizes at once the point which is the key to the campaign, so according to a very ancient tradition, the head of the Apostles and chief representative of Christ went at once to the capital of the world, when the Apostles dispersed from Jerusalem, and made Rome the centre of the Christian religion.\* That Peter

are in a few cases incorrect, but others might be added, I note also that Weingarten has embodied, and thus popularized, this view in his convenient Chronological tables, *Zeittafeln*.

\* Compare the fine verses of Prudentius, *Peristeph.* 11, 433, 84, and many passages in the Fathers. The same special providence has been shown throughout the history of the Church. As soon as the Empire became Christian, the Emperor retired to the East, leaving Rome to the Pope. As soon as the Empire broke up into many kingdoms, the Pope's independence was again assured by his receiving one of these kingdoms. Now that the modern system of "Great

preached at Rome and died there is not denied by Harnack; and it is a point not to be forgotten when we consider a question which lies outside the scope of his history. "Was 'the process by which the Church was unified and Catholicized' providential or accidental?" To Harnack, of course, the answer presents no difficulties; he regards the 'Catholicizing' of the Church as an evil, though a necessary evil, without which the Church could not have survived or have conquered the opposing forces of the world. On the other hand, to the Fathers and to all Christians who believe in the Church in any manner whatsoever, the process must be regarded as providential, that is as divinely directed and intended. The primacy, therefore, of the Roman Church (ensured by means of "the significance of the Eternal City in profane history,") and the identification of "Roman" with Catholic were especially intended and directed by the Holy Spirit. We are not surprised, therefore, that the princes of the Apostles should have consecrated by their blood the city which was to have a larger rule as the head of Christianity than it had possessed as the capital of the Roman Empire.\*

2. But Harnack adds another caution: the two propositions are pure fictions "when devised in honour of the temporary occupant of the Roman see." It is

Powers" has arisen, the little State has been lost, having become an insufficient guarantee. The next development is awaited by Catholics with absolute confidence in the power and love of God and in the indestructibility of His Church.

\* St Prosper, *Carmen de Ingratis*, I, 40; St Leo, Sermon. 72: "Ut latius præsideres religione divina quam dominatione terrena."

the Roman "Church," not the Roman "Bishop," who in the first place exercised the primacy derived from the imperial city. Now at first sight this statement seems to contradict what Harnack has just been laying down; for though he points out that the Epistle of Clement (which Bishop Lightfoot considered the first step to "papal aggression,") is written in the name of his Church, yet he calls special attention to the importance assigned by the tradition of the Eastern and Western Churches to Clement, and is aware that the letter is personally attributed to him soon after the middle of the second century.

The explanation is simply that Dr Harnack is trammelled by a theory to which in the history of dogma he does not even allude, but which he developed at length later in his *Chronologie*.\* He holds that there was no bishop at Rome, though bishops were the universal rule elsewhere, until Anicetus, about the year 155-6, only about fifteen years before the date (c. 170) he gives for the composition of the first list of Roman Bishops. He calmly remarks that it is incomprehensible how such a list could be accepted as true, when many persons living (all the grown-up people!) could remember a different state of things!† This truly marvellous theory is not likely to be accepted in England, and it is probable that Dr Harnack will sooner or later declare that he himself renounces it. But it throws light on his admission that by the time of Pope Victor and even of Eleutherius, c. 180-90, it was already the bishop and not the Church

\* Vol. I, pp. 173 fol.

† Ibid. p. 199.

who was the chief factor in Church government. From that time onward nobody doubts upon what foundation the Popes themselves have grounded their claims, or to what claims those submitted who accepted their supremacy.

We may clearly reject this second caution of Harnack's, since it rests only on the supposed fact that no bishop of Rome existed, and consequently that it was not through its bishop that the Church exercised its influence. If we suppose—and common sense forces us to suppose—that the Roman Church was organized in the same fashion as all the rest of the Churches, it follows that its bishop enjoyed precisely the same primacy that his Church possessed, since he was her ruler and her spokesman. Nevertheless, we may thank Harnack for emphasizing the interesting point that the "Roman Church" rather than "the temporary occupant of the Roman see" is the important factor in the second and third centuries. It is certain that "the authority of the Roman Church" is the earliest way of expressing "the universal jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff," just as "Roman faith" was the earliest formula for papal infallibility.

To return to "Catholic" and "Roman." It is clear that we are bound to accept in general, if not in detail, the consent of modern historians, and to regard the identity of the two expressions as primitive, and if primitive, surely as divinely ordered and intentional.

Now it is this inevitable identity which has made it possible for the adjective "Roman," when used as a nickname for the Church, to stick, when no unsuit-

able name would ever stick. For it is in reality not a nickname, however it may be intended by those who employ it, but a completion. In "Catholic" we have, so to speak, a circumference, to which "Roman" adds the centre; and since Roman and Catholic are in practice identical, "Roman" alone is sometimes a correct expression. "Roman faith" was a proverb from the time of St Paul.\* By the fourth century it is used as the equivalent of "the Catholic faith." † The first instance of "the Roman religion" meaning the Catholic Church happens to be Greek: "worthy priests of the Roman religion," τῆς Ρωμαϊκῆς θρησκείας. It occurs in a letter of the Emperor Theodosius the younger, written to Acacius of Beroëa, St Symeon Stylites, and others in the year 431. ‡ In 520 we find the great St Fulgentius of Ruspe, with eleven other African bishops, quoting with especial approval the words of Pope Hormisdas: "That which the Roman, that is the Catholic, Church teaches, etc." § But such expressions remain uncommon.

The Arian Vandals who devastated Spain and Africa in the fifth century affected "to call the men of our religion Romans," says St Gregory of Tours, || and examples of this usage occur in his work. ¶ The Abbot Joannes Biclarensis tells us that in his days (A.D. 581)

\* Rom. i, 8: "Your faith is announced throughout the whole world." The phrase is quoted of the Roman Church by Irenæus, Cyprian (twice), the Roman clergy who corresponded with him, St Jerome (often), St Augustine, St Leo, and others, as apostolic praise of the inviolable faith of the Church. About A.D. 107, St Ignatius addressed that Church as "filtered clear from every foreign stain."

† Some instances will be given later.

‡ Mansi, v, 283; Labbe, III, 1087.

§ St Fulgentius, Ep. 15.

|| Hist. I, 29.

¶ I, 79, 80.

King Leovigildus called a council of Arian bishops at Toledo, in which they decided that "those who come over from the Roman religion to our Catholic faith shall not be rebaptized."\* So the African bishop, Victor of Vite, who wrote his history of the horrible Vandal persecutions in 487, makes an Arian bishop, speak of "the Romans," meaning "the Catholics."† In reply, we find a Catholic bishop of Africa in the fifth century thus apostrophizing the Arianism of the conquerors: "Thou art not believed to hold the true faith of the Catholic Church, who teachest not that the Roman faith is to be preserved."‡ In the eyes of the preacher the heretics refute themselves when they confess that their victims hold the Roman faith.

In England we now occasionally hear this same affectation of using "Roman" for "Catholic," though not very frequently. The remembrance of the awful massacres by the barbarous Arians might be a reason for avoiding their example in this point, but the important matter is that to speak of a Catholic as a "Roman," or of the Catholic Church as the "Roman Church," is bad English because unintelligible. A Roman is an inhabitant of that city, and the Roman Church is a local Church. Such ambiguities are utterly indefensible in educated people. "The Roman faith" or "A Roman religion" are, on the contrary, perfectly correct expressions, consecrated by the use of the

\* P.L. lxxii, p. 866.

† 1, 14.

‡ Published by Cardinal Mai in *Nova Patr. Collectio*, vol. 1, Serm. 120, attributed to St Augustine, but really a little later, as the saint died during the siege of Hippo, in the first year of the conquest, and the style is not his.



saints, to mean the Catholic faith and the Catholic religion, for there is here no amphibology.

The common use of "Roman Catholic" in England demands a word of explanation. If we were to say *le bon Dieu* in the sense that there is another God who is not good, we should be blaspheming. So if the expression "Roman Catholic Church" is used in a way which implies that there is another Catholic Church which is not Roman, then the use is heretical as well as unmeaning. But if "Roman" is merely an epithet, the addition is unnecessary but unobjectionable, for whatever is Catholic is also Roman. It is in this sense that the Church calls herself officially "Catholic and Roman," where the "and" removes all danger of ambiguity. But in the mouths of Protestants "Roman Catholic" has often the former sense with its improper insinuation, and as such it cannot be accepted as a correct expression. In the true sense Catholics use it occasionally when there is sufficient reason, for in their mouth every one recognizes the meaning it bears.

The identity from the beginning of Roman and Catholic has become more and more marked, but even in early times "Roman" was sometimes found a practical and useful test, when "Catholic" was difficult to apply. There are obvious instances of this in St Ambrose, St Jerome, St Augustine,\* to name only doctors of the

\* St Ambrose tells us that his brother, St Satyrus, having been shipwrecked, desired Baptism: "He called to the bishop, and believing no grace to be true but that of the true faith, he asked him whether he was in agreement (*conveniret*) with the Catholic bishop, that is, with the Roman Church" (*De Exc. Satyri*, i, 47, written A.D. 379). St Jerome's words are famous: "Meantime I cry aloud,

Church. In the famous article in the *Dublin Review*,\* which had so extraordinary an effect upon Newman, Wiseman drew out this argument as his second point, under the heading: "According to the doctrine of the ancient Fathers it is easy at once to ascertain who are the Church Catholic, and who are in a state of schism, by simply discovering who are in communion with the see of Rome and who are not." The Rev. Mr Puller, in his *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome*, has combated this view with plenty of his characteristic

'If any is joined to the chair of Peter, he is mine'' (Ep. 16, *ad Damasum*). Of Rufinus he says: "What does he call his faith? that which the Roman Church possesses? or that which is contained in the volumes of Origen? If he answers, the Roman, it follows that he and they are Catholics, and have translated none of Origen's errors" (*c. Rufinum*, i, 4). Again to Demetrias: "I had nearly left out what is most important. When you were a child and Bishop Anastasius of holy memory ruled the Roman Church, a fierce storm of heretics from the East tried to sully and destroy the simplicity of faith which was praised by the mouth of the apostle (Rom. i, 8). But that man of richest poverty and apostolic solicitude straightway smote the noxious head and stopped the mouth of the hissing hydra. And because I am afraid, nay, I have heard the rumour, that these poisonous shoots are still alive and vigorous in some, I feel I ought with the deepest affection to give you this advice, to hold the faith of holy Innocent, who is the successor and son of that man, and of the apostolic see, and not to receive any foreign doctrine, however prudent and clever you may think yourself to be" (Ep. 130, p. 992, written in 414). For St Augustine it suffices to cite the famous appeal to the Donatists in his A B C hymn: "Number the bishops, if you will, from the very chair of Peter, and see who succeeded whom in this catalogue of Fathers; this is the rock against which the proud gates of hell do not prevail;" and to Generosus: "Since you hold the Christianity, not of your own city alone, not only of Africa and the Africans, but of the whole world, which has been announced and

\*Aug. 1839. Reprinted in cheap form by the Catholic Truth Society.

paradox. He begins by saying:\* "It is obvious that the theory which underlies Dr Wiseman's statement is based on the notion that the Church's unity is always visibly manifested by the intercommunion of her various parts." Quite so. This "notion" had been abundantly proved by the Cardinal in his first point, out of the writings of St Optatus, St Jerome and St Augustine. That first point was that communion with the Churches of the whole world is the test of Catholicity. Mr Puller thinks otherwise; but then he has an inveterate habit of disagreeing with the primitive saints, and enjoys stripping off their haloes. One whole folio volume of St Augustine's works, besides many of his most important letters and ser-

is being announced to all nations [*as the Faith of Rome*] Rom. i, 8, . . . If an angel from heaven should say: 'Let go the Christianity of the world, and hold that of the party of Donatus, whose order [of bishops] is set forth for you in the letter of the bishop of your city,' he should be anathema; because he would be trying to cut you off from the whole, and to thrust you down into a part, and to alienate you from the promises of God. For if the order of bishops succeeding one another is to be considered, how much more certainly and securely do we reckon from Peter himself, to whom, as the representative of the whole Church, the Lord said: Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? For to Peter succeeded Linus; to Linus, Clement," etc., etc. (Ep. 531). And again, to the Manicheans: "The consent of peoples and nations keeps me in the Church; so does her authority inaugurated by miracles, nourished by hope, increased by love, confirmed by age. The succession of bishops keeps me, beginning from the very seat of the apostle Peter, to whom the Lord after His resurrection commended His sheep to be fed, down to the present episcopate; and lastly, so does the name of Catholic, which not without cause in the midst of so many heresies the Church has still retained," etc. (*c. Epist. Manich. Fund. v, 5*).

mons, is devoted to the proof against the Donatists that those are schismatics and outside the one body of Christ who are not in communion with the Church Catholic throughout the world. St Jerome's book against the Luciferians and Optatus's long reply to Parmenianus are written with the same object. This doctrine is, of course, found sometimes in forcible language in earlier Fathers like Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and the rest of the Church writers ever since. Mr Puller has not quoted, nor has anyone else, a single passage from any of the Fathers in which the non-necessity is suggested or admitted.

Mr Puller, on the other hand, has devoted six lectures (vii-xii) to prove that communion with the Church throughout the world is not necessary—the contradictory proposition to that upheld by the three primitive saints whom Wiseman had cited as witnesses. I know that to Mr Puller, as to all Anglicans, the divisibility of the Church is the *articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ*. I do not quarrel with his upholding this dogma, incredible though it appears to me. But to attempt its proof from the writings or histories of the primitive saints is paradoxical beyond all bearing. To refute him would be waste of time. But St Cyprian may pass judgement: "And does anyone believe that this unity, thus proceeding from the divine immutability, and cohering in heavenly sacraments, can be rent asunder in the Church, and be split by the divorce of antagonist wills? He who holds not this unity, holds

not the law of God, holds not the faith of Father and Son, holds not life and salvation." \* Awful words, in which a great saint and martyr of the primitive age judges the Anglican theory!

But we have wandered from the Cardinal's second point. The first point was that communion with the Churches of the whole world is the test of Catholicity, a tautological proposition, which only the most lamentable delight in paradox can deny. The second point is that it is sufficient to prove communion with Rome, for that implies *ipso facto* communion with all the rest. Cardinal Wiseman carefully proved his thesis from the system of *formatæ*, or letters of communion, in the early Church which had Rome for its centre, and then by the direct testimony of many of the primitive saints. Mr Puller passes over these arguments, and gives in reply four events (not statements from the writings of the primitive saints, for he could find none such) which he himself imagines to be capable of being explained in a way which contradicts what the Fathers explicitly and frequently state.†

\* *De Eccl. Cath. Unitate.*

†The four points: (a) in the second century, the rebukes administered to Pope St Victor for excommunicating the Asiatics. I ask, Did any remonstrating bishop suggest that the power was wanting to Victor, or only the justification? Harnack asks: "How could Victor have ventured on such an edict—though indeed he had not the power of enforcing it in every case—unless the special prerogative of Rome to determine the conditions of the 'common unity' in the vital questions of the faith had been an acknowledged and well-established fact?" I think Mr Puller would have been well advised if he had passed over this point.

(b) In the second century: Firmilian and Cyprian resist the excommunication launched by Pope Stephen. It is indeed regrettable

I have already given in a note some instances of the application of the test by three doctors of the Church. It would be easy to add dozens of early testimonies to the necessity of communion with the successor of St Peter. But here it would be out of place, and it is sufficient for the moment that no serious objection has been brought against the doctrine. I will only further refer to two early witnesses, on account of their intrinsic importance, the famous passage of St Irenæus, III, 3, which, however it be translated, implies

that two such great men should have used such violent language when wrongly believing themselves to have just cause for complaint. Mr Puller is for once absolutely in sympathy with a primitive saint. So, in this same point, were the Donatists, but so was not a single one of the remaining number of the primitive saints. St Augustine wishes to pass over in silence what St Cyprian in his irritation poured forth against Stephen (*De Bapt. c. Donat. v, 25, 36*). St Jerome simply condemns him (*c. Lucif. 27*); and St Vincent of Lerins, with all admiration and respect for his holiness and his martyrdom, in this one question numbers him among the heresiarchs. One could wish that Mr Puller had found some other point on which to agree with this great saint. The following parallel is instructive:

*Primitive Saints*, p. 70.

“If he [Stephen] did so die [as a martyr], we may hope that he purged away in that second baptism whatever was amiss in his life.”

St Aug. *De Bapt. i, 18 (28)*.

“Cyprian arrived at the palm of martyrdom, so that if any cloud had arisen in his lucid mind through human frailty, it should be dispersed by the brilliant sunshine of his glorious blood.”

Is this contrast accidental?

(c) In the fourth century, the question of the rival Bishops of Antioch. St Meletius was acknowledged by most of the Easterns, while Paulinus was supported by Alexandria and Egypt, Rome and the whole West. As there was admittedly no schism between those who took different sides, and as Rome never gave the slightest reproof to those who believed St Meletius to be in the right,

the necessity of communion with Rome, and the history of the first few months of the Novatian schism, with the evidence from the letters of St Cyprian at that time. As for Mr Puller, and all those who agree with him, they will perhaps listen to a great Englishman of ancient times, the Venerable Bede: "It is for this that blessed Peter confessed Christ with true faith and followed Him with true love, especially received the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the primacy of judicial power, in order that all believers

it is incomprehensible why Mr Puller should have devoted half his book to this question.

(d) The Acacian troubles. Here we find the Popes trying to prevent the court party of Constantinople from dallying with heresy. Their position is one of extraordinary dignity and consistency, and in the end they are victorious. But Mr Puller's notion that the suspension of communion by the Pope with Constantinople and certain leading bishops entailed the guilt of schism on every Christian of the Eastern Church is really too preposterous. The Easterns were very slippery, but even Mr Puller allows that half the bishops (p. 402) of the patriarchate of Constantinople (a considerable *μέλωσ*) signed the famous formula of Hormisdas, which contained not only the strongest assertion of Roman inerrancy, but also the most forcible statement of the necessity of communion with the Pope. It should be enough to know that it was confirmed by the fourth Council of Constantinople. The great difficulty was to get the bishops to accept the Council of Chalcedon, and to anathematize those who had communicated with heresy. There was no difficulty raised about the Roman question, and it is simply Mr Puller's own imagination which makes him suppose that many bishops were ready to accept the Council, provided they need not submit to the Pope! The whole history is a tremendous witness to the orthodoxy and firmness of Rome, and to its position as recognized in the east. As to the list of saints given by Mr Puller, pp. 390-5, as having lived out of communion with Rome, he has in every case made a statement without offering any proof. *Quod gratis affirmatur, gratis negatur*. On Catholic principles (which he does not appear to know) his statements are nonsense.



throughout the world may understand that whoever separates himself in any way from the unity of His faith or fellowship—such as these, can neither be absolved from the chains of their sins, nor can they enter the gate of the heavenly kingdom.”\*

DOM JOHN CHAPMAN, O.S.B.

\* Hom. Bk 11, xvi.

## CHAPTER V

## The Apostolicity of the Church

THE best and not the least impressive of the marks or notes of the Church is her *Apostolicity*. Every Christian who recites the Nicene Creed declares, "*I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.*"

Our Lord's commission to His Apostles, "*Go, teach, all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; and, lo! I am with you all days even unto the end of the world,*"\* was addressed to them not in their individual capacity, but as a corporate body of men that was to last to the end of the world. As individuals the Apostles would pass away like the rest of men, but their work was to remain and to be carried on by their successors, upon whom would devolve the duty of teaching and baptizing, and who would inherit the promise of divine assistance. These words, therefore, apply not only to the Apostles, but to their lawful successors in an apostolic succession that would never fail. They were to have successors (1) to their *doctrine*, (2) to their *mission*, (3) to their *orders*, (4) to their *jurisdiction*. No religious body that cannot trace its succession in these four points up to the Apostles can lay claim to the mark of *Apostolicity*.

Now it is a striking fact, and no doubt a providen-

\* Matt. xxviii, 19, 20.

tial fact, that the Apostolic Sees founded by the Apostles have all perished save one. Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Corinth, Smyrna, etc., have all passed away, and the apostolic succession in them has become extinct. Rome alone remains as the sole heir to their privileges. Cardinal Newman, in his *Letter addressed to the Duke of Norfolk* (§ 3), brings out this fact in a passage of singular power :

I say then, the Pope is the heir of the œcumenical hierarchy of the fourth century, as being, what I may call, heir by default. No one else claims or exercises its rights or its duties. Is it possible to consider the Patriarchs of Moscow or of Constantinople heirs to the historical pretensions of St Ambrose or St Martin? Does any Anglican bishop for the last three hundred years recall to our minds the image of St Basil? Well, then, has all that ecclesiastical power, which makes such a show in the Christian empire, simply vanished? or, if not, where is it to be found? I wish Protestants would throw themselves into our minds upon this point; I am not holding an argument with them; I am only wishing them to understand where we stand and how we look at things. There is this great difference of belief between us and them: they do not believe that Christ set up a visible society, or rather kingdom, for the propagation and maintenance of His religion, for a necessary home and refuge of His people; but we do. We know the kingdom is still on earth: where is it? If all that can be found of it is what can be discerned at Constantinople or Canterbury, I say it has disappeared; and either there was a radical corruption of Christianity from the first, or Christianity came to an end, in proportion as the type of the Nicene Church faded out of the world; for all that we know of Christianity in ancient history, as a concrete fact, is

the Church of Athanasius and his fellows; it is nothing else historically, but that bundle of phenomena, that combination of claims, prerogatives and corresponding acts, some of which I have recounted above. There is no help for it; we cannot take as much as we please and no more of an institution which has a monadic existence. We must either give up the belief in the Church as a divine institution altogether, or we must recognize it in that communion of which the Pope is the head. With him alone and round about him are found the claims, the prerogatives and duties, which we identify with the kingdom set up by Christ. We must take things as they are; to believe in a Church is to believe in the Pope. And thus this belief in the Pope and his attributes, which seems so monstrous to Protestants, is bound up with our being Catholics at all; as our Catholicism is with our Christianity. There is nothing, then, of wanton opposition to the powers that be, no dinning of novelties in their startled ears, in what is often unjustly called Ultramontane doctrine; there is no pernicious servility to the Pope in our admission of his pretensions. I say, we cannot help ourselves—Parliament may deal as harshly with us as it will; we should not believe in the Church at all, unless we believed in its visible head.

So it is; the course of ages has fulfilled the prophecy and promise, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." That which in substance was possessed by the Nicene hierarchy, that the Pope claims now. I do not wish to put difficulties in my way; but I cannot conceal or smooth over what I believe to be a simple truth, though the avowal of it will be very unwelcome to Protestants and, as I fear, to some Catholics. However, I do not call upon another to believe all that I believe on the subject myself. I declare it, as my own judgement, that the prerogatives,

such as, and in the way in which I have described them, in substance, which the Church had under the Roman power, those she claims now, and never, never will relinquish; claims them, not as having received them from a dead empire, but partly by the direct endowment of her divine Master, and partly as being a legitimate outcome of that endowment; claims them, but not except from Catholic populations, not as if accounting the more sublime of them to be of everyday use, but holding them as a protection or remedy in great emergencies or on supreme occasions, when nothing else will serve, as extraordinary and solemn acts of her religious sovereignty. And our Lord, seeing what would be brought about by human means, even had He willed it, and recognizing, from the laws which He Himself had imposed upon human society, that no large community could be strong which had no head, spoke the word in the beginning, as He did to Judah, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise," and then left it to the course of events to fulfil it.

Those religious bodies who are not in touch with the only Apostolic See that is left to us after the political convulsions of the ages must be prepared to find that they are denied possession of the note of Apostolicity. The early Fathers have strongly insisted on this note of Apostolicity as being characteristic of the true Church as distinguished from all "temples made with hands." For instance, St Irenæus, the disciple of St Polycarp, who is believed to have been consecrated by St John the Evangelist, thus argues against certain heretics of his time: "We can count up those who were appointed bishops in the churches by the Apostles and their successors down to us; none of them taught this doctrine. But as it would be tedious to enumerate

the succession in the different Churches, we refer you to the tradition of that greatest, most ancient and universally known Church, founded at Rome by St Peter and St Paul, which has been preserved there through the succession of its bishops down to the present time.”\*

Tertullian argues against the heretics of his day in the same strain: “Let them produce the origin of their Church, let them display the succession of their bishops, so that the first of them may appear to have been ordained by an *apostolic man* who persevered in their communion.” He adds: “Let the heretics feign anything like this.”† This in the second century. St Augustine in the fifth century follows the same line of argument: “I am kept in this Church,” he says, “by the succession of prelates from St Peter, to whom the Lord committed the care of His sheep, down to the present bishop.”‡ St Optatus, writing against the Donatists, names the Bishops of Rome down to Siricius then reigning: “With whom,” he adds, “we and all the world are united in communion; do you Donatists now give the history of your ministry.”§ “Here was what may be considered a *dignus vindice nodus*, the Church being divided and an arbiter wanted. . . . St Augustine then, who so often appeals to the *orbis terrarum*, sometimes adopts a more prompt criterion. He tells certain Donatists to whom he writes that the Catholic Bishop of Carthage was able to

\* *Adv. Heres.* III, 1, 2. † *De Præscript.*, c. xxxiii.

‡ *Contra Epist. Man. quam vocant Fundamenti*, n. 5.

§ *De Schismate Donatistarum*, ii, n. 3.

make light of the thronging multitude of his enemies when he found himself by letters of credence joined *both to the Roman Church, in which had ever flourished the principality of the Apostolic See*, and to other lands whence the Gospel had come to Africa itself.”\*

We have now to deal directly with the question of Apostolicity.

And first as to *apostolic teaching*. St Augustine tells us how we are to judge of apostolic doctrine when he says, “What the universal Church holds, and what was not instituted by Councils, but has always been retained, is most rightly believed not to have been handed down except by apostolic authority.”† And every Catholic teacher must be able to say with St Paul, “For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through the revelation of Jesus Christ.”‡ And again, “But though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preach unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before so we say again, if any man preach unto you any gospel other than that which you have received, let him be anathema.”§

Nothing can be easier than to determine what is *not* apostolic doctrine. Truth is one, and therefore cannot contradict itself; and apostolic doctrine because it is true must therefore be one and cannot contradict

\*Newman, *Develop.*, p. 729 seq. † *De Bapt. c. Donat.* IV, 31.

‡ Gal. i, 11 seq. § *Ibid.* 8, 16.



itself: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"\* as St Paul has it. Therefore the jumble of contradicting opinions taught in rival Protestant pulpits cannot be apostolic doctrine. What one teacher declares to be true his rival will declare to be false; and thus one, if not both, must instruct the people to deny the apostolic teaching of the Gospel. There are said to be some three hundred registered religious sects in England alone, agreeing in nothing save in their hostility to the Church of God. They rail against Rome's "cast-iron" system. They have been so used to play fast and loose with religious truth that they fail to grasp the fact that every system of truth from the multiplication table upwards must be "cast-iron" if it is not to contradict itself. Protestant sects remind one of the November meteors, which have been flung off from their centre only to come in contact with the atmosphere and by the impact to become so heated that they are consumed by their own fire. So with the sects. They have been cast off from the centre of unity, only to come in contact with human reason, whose assault they are unable to withstand because they are not stamped with the divine element of unity and truth.

2. Now as regards *apostolic mission*. We read in the prophet Jeremiah: "*I did not send prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken, yet they prophesied.*" † And the prophet Isaias says of himself: "*The Lord God hath sent me and His spirit.*" ‡ There is divine mission. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that certain Jewish exorcists tried to cast out an evil spirit in the name of the

\* Eph. iv, 5.

† xxiii, 21.

‡ xlix, 16.

Lord Jesus: "And the evil spirit answered them, Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?"\*

This is the question that every one who claims to come to us with a divine message must answer: "Who are you? Who *sent* you? and where are your credentials?" Every ambassador, especially if he be an ambassador for Christ, must produce his credentials to prove that he is the accredited agent of the power he claims to represent.

Now we know very well who *sent* St Augustine to convert this country. He was sent by the apostolic authority. Pope Gregory writes: "We commit to your brotherly care all the bishops of Britain, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, the perverse corrected by authority."† Here is apostolic mission by an apostolic authority. But where does the person who claims to sit in the chair of St Augustine get his mission from? From the same apostolic authority? Of course not. This mission comes from the crown. Here is Edward VI's patent for the appointment of bishops: "We name, make, create, constitute and declare N. Bishop of N. to have and to hold to himself the said bishopric during the term of his natural life, if for so long he behave himself well therein, and *empower him to confer orders*, to institute to livings, to exercise *all manner of jurisdiction* and to do all that pertains to the episcopal or pastoral office over and above the things known to have been committed to him by God in the Scriptures *in place of us in our name and by our authority*."‡ This Erastian

\* Acts xix, 15. † Bede, I, xxvii. ‡ I Edward, ix, 1.

principle was reasserted in the reign of Elizabeth, who required every clergyman to take a solemn oath declaring the Queen to be "*the only Supreme Governor* of this realm in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes."\* Here is the civil power conferring civil mission. It can confer no other, for it has none. Apostolic authority it has none and does not claim to have. *Nemo dat quod non habet*. Protestant dissenting bodies do not claim to inherit any apostolic mission, and therefore it is needless to discuss a claim that is not made.

3. As regards *Apostolic Orders* it means that the apostolic succession has come down to us in an unbroken line from the Apostles. Protestant dissenters do not believe in apostolic succession, and do not claim to possess it. Nor did Anglicans as a rule until quite recently. We all remember the saying attributed to Bishop Blomfield, Anglican Bishop of London, that "belief in the apostolic succession had gone out with the non-jurors." This was no doubt to a certain extent true at the time. The validity of the Anglican apostolic succession depends upon two facts, one historical, the other liturgical. Barlow is the connecting link in the Anglican succession. Was he himself a consecrated bishop? The evidence, as far as it is known, all tends to prove that he was not. What complicates the matter is the well-known fact that in those days a man might be a *diocesan* bishop without being a *consecrated* bishop, in the same way that a man may now be a *consecrated* bishop without being a *diocesan* bishop. The two things

\* 1 Eliz. c. i, sec. 19.

did not run together. Abbot-bishops still exist. The abbot of some great monasteries is the *diocesan* bishop though not a *consecrated* bishop. He rules the diocese in all matters of jurisdiction and has an assistant, a consecrated bishop, to ordain and confirm. When a man was duly elected and had his election confirmed and obtained loyal possession of the temporalities of his see, he became *de jure* and *de facto* diocesan bishop, and as long as he abstained from ordaining and confirming, no one could question his position. Bonner is a case in point. His election to the see of Hereford was confirmed December 17, 1538. He was translated to London, and had his election confirmed November 11, 1539, and was not consecrated till April 4, 1540. In three commissions,\* dated November 30, 1539, February 11 and March 16, 1539-40 he styles himself, "Edmund by divine permission Bishop of London," though he was not consecrated till April 4, 1540. The fact that he had previously been acting as *diocesan* bishop is no proof that he had been previously *consecrated*. This fact disposes of the presumption advanced by Lingard and others, that because Barlow acted as diocesan bishop he *must* have been consecrated. Barlow is himself an instance to the contrary. He was in Scotland when he was elected to the vacant See of St Asaph's. His election was confirmed on February 22 or 23, 1535. He was translated to St David's, and confirmed to the same, April 21, 1535. That he never was consecrated Bishop of St Asaph's is clear from the fact that he did not return from Scotland till after he was

\* *Reg Bonner*, fol. 8.

electd to St David's, April 10, and also from the fact that all the documents in the Lambeth Register relating to the translation speak of Barlow as bishop *elect* of St Asaph's. For instance, in the *congé d'élire* for the election of Barlow's successor the see is said to be vacant "per liberam *transmutationem* Wilhelmi Barlow ultimi episcopi *electi*."\* On April 26 he received his *Grant of Temporalities*. On April 27 he received his writ of summons to the House of Lords, and on May 1 was enthroned by proxy as Bishop of St David's. Meanwhile he had gone back to Scotland, from which he did not return till after June 12. Thomas Hawley, honorary king-of-arms, Barlow's attendant, left Edinburgh May 23 and arrived in London on June 12, but as Barlow remained behind "for a daye or twaine" at the request of the Queen of Scotland, and as it was a three weeks' journey from Edinburgh to London, Barlow could not have arrived till later. There is, therefore, not a scrap of evidence to prove, as the Anglican apologists assert, that Barlow "must have been consecrated on June 11," or that he had returned from Scotland before that date. It is on record that Sampson of Chichester and Reppes of Norwich were consecrated June 11, but there is no record of Barlow having been present or having been consecrated. In fact, there is every reason to believe he was not present for the reason already given, that he could not have returned from Scotland in time. He received his "Grant of Temporalities" on April 26. This document is a very ominous one. It was a grant made to unconsecrated

\* *Cranm. Register*, 194a.

bishops giving them possession of their temporalities *until* they were consecrated. But Barlow's grant is different. It grants him possession "during his life" on account of the "*vacancy*" of the see. This document, therefore, distinctly contemplates the fact of Barlow holding the see of St David's for his life without being consecrated, and provides for his doing so. Barlow took his seat in Parliament June 30, but below Sampson, who took his on June 12, and Reppes, who took his on June 17; but he ought to have taken his seat above them, because he received his summons to Parliament on April 27, and according to his "place of precedence" ought to have ranked before them. The temporalities of an English see are equivalent to a barony, and constitute the lawful holder a spiritual peer, and with a right to a seat in the House of Lords, even though unconsecrated. Gibson\* says distinctly, "A bishop *confirmed* may sit in Parliament as a peer thereof."

How comes it, then, that as Barlow's peerage was of more ancient date than that of Sampson and Reppes, he did not take his "place of precedence" as he ought to have done, but had to give way to peers of later creation? The only explanation that occurs to me is that Barlow was regarded as being only the *Custos Spiritualiter*, an official who represented the diocese *sede vacante* and who sat below the regularly consecrated bishops. Barlow held his temporalities *sede vacante* and therefore could not be regarded as the ordinary of the see of St David's, but only as a stop-gap, not having yet received the restitution of temporalities in due course

\* *Codex Juris Eccl. Angl.* 1, p. 148.

granted to a duly consecrated bishop. These difficulties are confirmed by the absence of documentary evidence. If Barlow had been consecrated, there ought to have been the following documents to prove it: (1) The *Royal Mandate* known as the *Significavit* ordering Cranmer to consecrate Barlow within twenty-one days under pain of *præmunire*; (2) *the Licence of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury*; (3) the *Record* of the consecration in Cranmer's Registry; (4) the *Certificate* of the same to the crown; (5) the *entry* of consecration in the local register of the bishop consecrated; (6) supposing Cranmer did not consecrate, which he seldom did at this time, there was the *Commission* for some one to act in his stead, which ought to be found in Cranmer's Register. Now if only *some* of these documents were missing, the fact could be explained, but how are we to explain the loss of *the whole* of them? There is no instance in Henry VIII's reign of any bishop in whose case all these documents are missing except Barlow's. All the documents concerning his election are in perfect order. How can we explain the loss of all the documents concerning his consecration, except on the ground that no consecration ever took place? Take the *Royal Mandate* or *Significavit*. When it was issued, it was sent to the Lord Privy Seal to be stamped with the Privy Seal. It was then sent to the Lord Chancellor to be stamped with the Great Seal and to be engrossed on the Rolls Patent. The original was then deposited amongst the Privy Seal papers. The original is not amongst the Privy Seal papers, and no copy has ever been engrossed on the Rolls Patent. How



is this? Without this document it was as much as Cranmer's head was worth to attempt to consecrate Barlow to any English See. And unless this document was issued, we may be quite sure that no consecration ever took place.

Lingard asks the question: "Why, I will ask, are we to believe that of all the bishops who lived in the long reign of Henry VIII Barlow alone held and exercised the episcopal office without episcopal consecration?" The reason is not far to seek. If we were dealing with quiet and orderly times, it would be unreasonable to doubt the fact of Barlow's consecration; but we are dealing with times of violent change and innovation, when the new learning of which Cranmer and Barlow were pioneers began to prevail. In Burnet's *History of the Reformation*\* are found certain questions with the answers given by various bishops. Question: "Whether in the New Testament *be required any consecration of a bishop or a priest, or only appointing to the office be sufficient?*" Cranmer: "In the New Testament he that is appointed to be a bishop or priest *needeth no consecration by the Scripture, for election or appointment thereto is sufficient.*" Barlow: "Only the appointing."

It was Cranmer's place as primate to see that Barlow was consecrated, but as he and Barlow were agreed that consecration was quite unnecessary, there is nothing unreasonable in assuming that they would act upon their avowed principles. They had both fallen from the faith on this very point. Provided Barlow abstained from ordaining or confirming, his position as

\* Part I, bk. iii, n. 21.

*diocesan* bishop was unassailable. Now, as a chain is not stronger than its weakest link, and as the fact of Barlow having been a consecrated bishop is extremely doubtful, any orders derived from him must be regarded as practically invalid.

The fact that settles the whole matter is the liturgical one. Cranmer having lost all faith in the efficacy of Holy Orders, took it upon himself to alter the Ordinal so as to express his own views. He struck out what in the old English Pontificals was known as the *Prayer of Consecration* and the accompanying imposition of hands, and in the case of the bishops substituted for it the following: "Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love and soberness." In the case of the priest the form used was: "Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained, and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God and of His holy Sacraments. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The phrase, "Be thou a faithful dispenser," etc., is taken from the Wittenburg Confession, a Lutheran profession of faith, and is inserted in order to show that this Ordination service is to be taken in a Lutheran sense.\* "And then the charge given in Ordination should be to teach the Gospel and administer the sacraments, not of other works, as to the living and the dead," are the words of this Lutheran

\* Estcourt, *Anglican Ordinations*, p. 266.

profession of faith. Now both these forms of Ordination, as sacramental forms, are quite valueless. Cranmer's Ordinal, as Lingard puts it, became "as fit a form for the appointment of a parish clerk as the spiritual ruler of a diocese."\*

A sacrament is defined to be "an outward *sign* of inward grace." The outward sign must *signify* the inward grace. It must contain what theologians call the *principium determinationis*. In the Ordination service, as the imposition of hands is matter common to the three great orders, the form of words must *signify* the inward grace, either by naming the office conferred, or by naming its grace and power. These new Anglican forms are quite indefinite and signify nothing. They are in fact not sacramental forms at all, and were not meant to be so. Article XXV denies that Holy Orders is a sacrament. Protestant theologians were perfectly well aware that it was on this ground that the validity of Anglican Orders was denied. Bramhall, for instance, in his *Consecration of Protestant Bishops Vindicated*,† thus states the objection quite correctly: "In all the Catholic rituals, not only of the West but of the East, there is not one form of consecrating bishops that hath not the word 'bishop' in it, or some other word expressing the particular authority and power of a bishop distinctly; but in our consecration [i.e., the Anglican] there is not one word to express the difference and power of episcopacy, for these words, 'Receive the Holy Ghost,' are indifferent to priesthood and episcopacy, and are used in both ordinations."

\* Vol. VI, note DD. † p. 162.

True, he tries to answer this objection which is unanswerable. Burnet says that the omissions of the words "bishop" and "priest" in the essential forms "having been made use of to prove both functions, one was of late years altered," over a hundred years too late, however, to be of any use to the line of prelates it introduced. St Thomas,\* with regard to alterations made by the minister in the words which constitute the sacramental form, says: "Therefore, if by this kind of addition or mutilation he intends to introduce another rite *which has not been received by the Church*, he does not appear to confer the sacrament, because it does not appear that he intends to do what the Church does." This is only common sense. The Anglican Ordinal does what it was intended to do. It was drawn up for the express purpose of not making sacrificing priests in the Catholic sense, but Gospel ministers in the Protestant sense. Common-sense Protestants quite admit the truth and justice of this principle. The Bishop of Sodor and Man, in his presidential address at his Diocesan Synod, thus comments on a remark made by Cardinal Vaughan, that the sacrificial or sacerdotal character of the Christian ministry was deliberately abandoned by the Anglican Church in the revised Ordinal :

Now in respect of the Cardinal's premiss, I am entirely at one with him. He has said, and said truly, that for over 300 years the Church of England has rejected the notion that the second order of the Christian ministry is to be regarded as an order of sacrificing priests, and has deliberately

\* 3, qu. lx, art. 8.

ceased to ordain them as such. You have only to place the old Ordinals side by side with our present one, and no man can possibly come to any other conclusion. Thus according to the Ordinal in use before the Reformation, the second order of the ministry were ordained with these words: "Take thou power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate Masses for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord." In plain English, they were ordained to be sacrificing priests. That was the chief thought which connected itself with their Ordination; and all the ritual which followed, and properly symbolized that system, went to emphasize this thought. The ordaining bishop then and there delivered to each of the clergy so ordained a paten and a chalice with unconsecrated bread and wine, which, when ordained, as co-celebrants with the bishops, they at once proceeded to consecrate. And all the vestments, ceremonies, rites and postures prescribed by the service-books of that time were designed to show that they were sacrificing priests, offering a propitiatory sacrifice, that what was offered was changed in its natural substance, and that adoration, in its changed condition, was its proper due. But let us be careful to note that these words of Ordination were deliberately changed during the course of the Reformation and further changed a little later on. Thus, in the Ordinal set forth in February, 1550, the words with respect to sacrifices and Masses were clean swept out; and though the bishop was still directed to give the paten and the chalice into one hand of the person ordained, he was directed also to give the Bible into the other and to ordain him with these altered words: "Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God and His holy Sacraments." But this was only a transition step, for in 1552 the delivery of the paten and the chalice was wholly discontinued, and

the bishop was directed, as by our present Ordinal, to place the Bible only in the hands of the presbyter newly ordained. For my part, then, I entirely concur with the Cardinal in his premiss; and I agree with him still further when he says that, even in its most advanced theologians, our Church has never, till quite recent times (I suppose he means the last half-century) shown any desire to return to what it utterly put aside.\*

This is the principle of St Thomas applied to the facts of the case with relentless logic. Catholics are in no such dilemma about their apostolic transmission of Orders. "Our starting-point is not the fact of the faithful transmission of Orders but the standing fact of the Church, the visible and one Church the reproduction and succession of herself age after age. It is the Church that vouches for our orders while she authenticates herself to be the Church not by her Orders but by her notes." † Some Anglicans claim to be Catholics because they have valid Orders. Catholics claim to have valid Orders because they are in the true Church which must possess all she requires for her spiritual life.

4. As regards *apostolic jurisdiction* little need be said, because no religious body in the country claims to possess it but the Catholic Church. Jurisdiction is defined to be "the moral power of ruling subjects," and is twofold: (1) *exterior*, which has to do with external government; (2) *interior*, which has to do with the sacramental form. This power is not given in Ordination but comes through the Church, and can only be conferred by the supreme authority in the Church.

\* *The Rock*, Nov. 2, 1894.

† Newman, *Essays*, II, p. 76.

For instance, a general cannot exercise any authority until he receives a command, for the plain reason that he has no men under him to command; and so a bishop or a priest can exercise no act of spiritual jurisdiction for lack of subjects, until he has subjects placed under him by an authority which has spiritual jurisdiction over both bishops, priests and people, i.e., the Apostolic See. Now the first principle of Anglicanism is that all spiritual jurisdiction comes from the crown. And as the crown has no jurisdiction in spirituals itself, it follows that the Anglican Church can have no claim to possess apostolic jurisdiction. One of the most distinguished of Anglican bishops has stated the case so clearly that it is only necessary to quote his words.

In the year 1805 the Irish Catholic bishops had subscribed a petition to Parliament and affixed to their names the titles of their respective sees. On its being presented in the House of Lords, an objection was urged respecting their titles; and in reply to a noble duke who had spoken in defence of the petitioners, Bishop Horsley spoke thus:

A noble duke on the opposite bench has said in exculpation of them that these Roman Catholic bishops are really "bishops." Most undoubtedly they are bishops as truly as any here. They are of the episcopal Order, and men, I dare say, in their individual character, highly worthy of that pre-eminence in the Church. But I am sure the noble duke knows enough of our ecclesiastical matters to be apprised of the distinction between the "power of Order" and the "power of jurisdiction." The power of Order these Roman Catholic



prelates possess. But the power of jurisdiction does not of necessity attach upon the power of Order. A man may be a bishop, and yet it follows not of necessity that he is bishop of a diocese. The two powers, that of Order and that of jurisdiction, are quite distinct, and of distinct origin. The power of Order is properly a capacity of exercising the power of jurisdiction conferred by a competent authority: and this power of *Order* is conveyed through the hierarchy itself, and no other authority but that of the hierarchy can give it. *The only competent authority* to give the power of episcopal jurisdiction in this kingdom is the crown. It is true that in this part of the United Kingdom that power may seem in some degree to flow from the hierarchy, because we have the form of an election of a person to be a bishop of a vacant see by the clergy of the cathedral. But this is a mere form; the Chapter cannot proceed to elect without the King's licence. The King's licence to elect is always accompanied with His Majesty's letter missive, recommending a fit person to their choice; and it always so falls out that the Chapter agree with the King in their opinion of the fitness of the person. In substance, therefore, the collation of the diocesan jurisdiction is from the Crown. In Ireland, the collation of the power of jurisdiction is both in form and substance from the Crown solely; for the prelates of that part of the kingdom are appointed to their respective sees without any *congè d'élire* or any form of election, by letters patent under the Great Seal. In neither part, therefore, of this kingdom, can there be any legitimate power of jurisdiction but what is conferred by the Crown; and the claim of such a power, independent of the Crown, is a most outrageous violation of the very first principles of our ancient constitution.\*

DOM J. DUNSTAN BREEN, O.S.B.

\* *Hansard*, First Series, vol. IV, col. 800.

## CHAPTER IV

## The Idea of Infallibility\*

THE ideal life of the Christian rests upon faith, as it develops through hope and attains perfection by charity. Being thus bound up with the three virtues known as "theological," the Christian life may be regarded as a virtual embodiment of them. The existence of each of these essential virtues depends upon certainty with regard to the object on which it is exercised. For example, charity, which signifies the mutual love of perfect amity, necessitates certainty of reciprocity. Hope, similarly, necessitates certainty as regards power and willingness to help on the part of the object on which it rests; the least doubt involves something akin to despair. Faith, likewise, depends for its existence in any vigorous life on a clear, undoubted certainty of truth. Faith cannot co-exist with uncertainty, which is only another term for doubt. Difficulties are often associated with faith, without detriment to it, but doubt is the first step towards un-faith, and being essentially contrary to Faith cannot coexist with it.

Faith, hope and charity are described as perfect virtues which admit of no imperfection. The certainty which necessarily attaches to each of them must, there-

\* These thoughts were suggested by a paper published by the Very Rev. Vincent McNabb, O.P., Prior of Woodchester.

fore, be of the same nature and partake of the same perfection.

We may define Faith to be an absolute assurance that certain principles, or propositions, or facts are true, and consequently admit of neither doubt nor dispute. It is not necessary that they should be susceptible of scientific proof, yet they can and must be accepted as certainly true and credible and capable of some kind of proof, though of a different kind from scientific or mathematical demonstration.

We may confidently assert that God exists; that He is One and Eternal; that the soul of man is immortal; and that man possesses free will. These are facts which may be by no means wholly understood by finite intelligence, yet there is no uncertainty about them, however partially or imperfectly they may be apprehended.

Faith is, then, equivalent to certainty. It is not claimed for it that it involves knowledge concerning every knowable truth, nor even perfect acquaintance with any single truth in every aspect of it. It is merely certain knowledge concerning some truths.

So far I hope that I may be fortunate enough to secure my reader's assent. We now come to the consideration of truths, which may be ranged under two separate heads, viz., natural and supernatural truths.

*Natural Truths* are such as belong to the domain of natural science, which, being capable of discovery by reason alone, can be proved by scientific demonstration, e.g., that iron expands when heated, water when frozen.

*Supernatural Truths* belong to the domain of super-

natural science, and are incapable of discovery by unaided reason, to which, however, they are not contrary. They may be both acceptable and agreeable to it, more especially when witnessed to by another reason superior to that of the human mind. For example, the Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, the Incarnation and sacramental grace.

*By reason* we are enabled to come into immediate contact with natural phenomena, mentally at all events.

*By faith* we are not enabled to come into direct mental contact with spiritual phenomena, but faith brings us into direct contact with an intelligence which is itself in immediate contact with such phenomena. And thus we say that by reason we perceive *immediately*; whereas by faith we accept and believe undoubtingly, but *mediately*—that is, we accept and believe that which is perceived immediately by some other mind than our own. To put the matter concisely, in order that faith may exist in the human mind there must exist inerrancy, or infallibility, outside that mind. Without infallibility faith would be rendered an impossibility. Were we not certain that the mind outside our own, on whose judgement we rely, is not merely cognizant of supernatural truths, but is also unerringly truthful in delivering them to us, we might hold opinions more or less probable, we might entertain what are termed “views” of supernatural verities, but we should lack faith, that is, we should lack genuine, undoubting assurance.

Is there any sect calling itself Christian which does not depend and rest finally upon God as the *fons et origo*

of all knowledge? In depending and resting upon God, who is Truth, all Christians rest and depend upon what we may call objective infallibility, whether it be of the Bible only; or of the Bible *plus* the tradition of early Christianity; or of the Bible *plus* tradition, *plus* a living, authoritative teaching voice. In all three cases it is upon the unerring mind at the back either of the book, or of the book *plus* tradition, or of the book *plus* tradition *plus* the voice, that all Christians rely. The idea, then, of inerrancy in faith is not peculiar to Catholicism. It is the common heritage of all who maintain that faith is absolute assurance, derived from perfect certainty that we possess of the unerring veracity of the mind whose word we accept.

Objective infallibility is necessary to faith, and from that necessity there is no escape, the one being involved by the other. Thoughtful minds need find no difficulty in *an organ of infallibility*. The question of such organ is a matter of history, and does not enter into the philosophical aspect of the idea of infallibility.

The derivation of infallibility explains its meaning sufficiently—*in-fallor*, I am not deceived, or led astray, or mistaken. Infallibility is not compatible with error, though it is not incompatible with absence of knowledge, for absence of knowledge is not necessarily error, which is the retention of untruth in place of truth. A man who in the darkness of night mistakes a milestone for a man is in error. But if he suspend his judgement until light is obtained, he has then no error to get rid of, but only to dispel ignorance through the accession

of light, and thus to overcome what was absence of knowledge owing to darkness. That which prevents error produces infallibility.

A. H. MATHEW

## CHAPTER VII

## Infallibility

THE late Dr Salmon, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, was fully justified in stating\* that “the issues of the controversy [between the Protestant and Catholic Churches] mainly turn on one great question . . . the question of the infallibility of the Church. If that be decided against us, our whole case is gone.” And he himself proceeds to maintain, indeed the whole work from which the quotation is made was intended to demonstrate, that Christ’s Church is not, either in its teachings or beliefs, infallible. Non-Catholics, however, are not agreed in accepting Dr Salmon’s view. The majority of them, no doubt, do so; but many others, among Anglicans especially, hold with Palmer† that “in a controversy of faith, the formal and decided judgement of the Universal Church . . . is absolutely binding on all individual Christians from the moment of its full manifestation.” And this is, and has been always, the doctrine which Catholics hold.

By infallibility, then, when predicated of the Church, we understand immunity from doctrinal error. It is spoken of so frequently as though it were something else that it is important to fix its meaning accurately. It does not presuppose or affect the personal holiness of those through whom it may be exercised. It does

\* *The Infallibility of the Church*, Lecture II.

† *A Treatise on the Church of Christ*, Part IV, ch. iv.



not imply that any new revelation is granted to them. It does not involve any divine impulse or inspiration to teach or to define. It does not afford any guarantee that it will be called into operation only at fitting times and through worthy motives. It is a specific gift; and, both in its concept and by the usage of those who claim it for the Church, it has one object only: to protect the Church, in her authoritative teaching and in her authorized beliefs, from doctrinal error. A child is setting forth orally or in writing a statement received from a father's lips; let the child's character be what it will; let the child exercise a perfect freedom as to the place and time and other circumstances in which it acts; suppose the father makes no further communication to it on the subject of the statement he had already made; suppose the child to speak or write under the father's watchful supervision, and suppose the father to have pledged himself that nothing shall be said or written by the child which is not contained in the story as told originally by himself. Should we not then have the father's authority for the statement of the child? Should we not regard the child, within the limits of his story, as sharing to the full whatever measure of inerrancy we believed the father to possess? And it is in a like manner we conceive of Church infallibility. God made known a revelation to His Church through Christ and His Apostles; the Church is to believe and teach that revelation under God's eye. Suppose Him to guarantee that her teachings and beliefs shall express—sometimes, it may be, less, sometimes more explicitly and

fully, but always with an absolute truthfulness—the revelation originally entrusted to her; and we shall have the only true and accepted concept of Church infallibility.

Has, then, infallibility, as thus defined and limited, been bestowed by Christ upon His Church? There is no *a priori* reasoning by which we can establish her possession of the gift.\* God was under no compulsion to make a revelation to mankind; and, when in His mercy He made it, and completed it through Christ and the Apostles, He was not bound to secure, by a further privilege, its permanency and purity. He might have left believers to show their appreciation of His gift by their solicitude and vigilance in guarding it; or He might have taken measures to preserve unaltered the more important of its doctrines, while permitting change and error to be introduced in those of lesser moment. The seeming desirability of doctrinal inerrancy affords no conclusive evidence that it has in fact been granted. Experience shows that many gifts have been withheld which appear to us, and perhaps are, of surpassing utility and excellence. For God is the master of His own gifts: He grants them when and how He pleases.

But, while we hold that there is no convincing *a priori* proof of Church infallibility, we do maintain its antecedent likelihood. God became incarnate that

\* Dr Salmon, in stating the Catholic case (Lecture v), makes it rest on the assumption that "God has provided us with an infallible guide"; and he proceeds to prove triumphantly that the assumption is unwarranted. He sets himself a singularly easy and quite unnecessary task: Catholics do not make the assumption.

He might the more effectually teach mankind divine truth: "To this end was I born, and for this am I come into the world, that I may bear witness to the truth."\* With much labour, through many sufferings, He founds a society and gives to it a revelation—a leading of revealed truths, by which its organization, its faith, laws, sacraments and worship are to be constituted and maintained. He Himself and the Apostles whom He had specially trained to carry on His work, and to whom He had made His intentions known, are unceasing in their efforts to preach this revelation to mankind, are emphatic in declaring that its acceptance is essential to salvation, are insistent with the faithful that though an angel from heaven should preach to them any gospel other than what they have received already, he must be anathema.† They compare it with the older dispensation to bring out more clearly its excellence and perfection; and they declare implicitly that this is the full and final measure of supernatural revelation which is to be bestowed by man. Surely we have proof in this that Christ and His Apostles regarded the Christian revelation as a blessing of inestimable value. And, lastly, it is not unnatural to infer that some special precaution was likely to be adopted, some special assistance to be provided for its preservation. The argument does not itself prove that the gift of infallibility has been bestowed, but it will at least predispose us to consider favourably any other evidence for the existence of the gift which can be brought forward.

\* John xviii, 37. † Gal. i, 8.

And such evidence will be found, I think, in the certain fact that the apostolic teachers of the Christian Church were themselves infallible. I do not now refer to their own implied or explicit declarations; as when they wrote, for instance, from the Council at Jerusalem: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us";\* and when St Paul told the Galatians, in words already quoted, that though an angel from heaven should preach another message to them, no credit must be given to him;† and again when he confirms his doctrine on virginity, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, by the impressive words: "And I think that I also have the spirit of God."‡ It seems indeed quite clear from these and other passages which might be cited that the Apostles believed themselves under a divine and unerring guidance; and, though their belief is not in itself convincing evidence of their infallibility, yet when we remember what manner of men they were and the circumstances in which they lived and died, it is a serious argument for the reality of their conviction. But I refer rather to the express declarations which our Lord Himself made to the Apostles; and to two of them particularly which appear to be conclusive. They occur in the last discourse which He addressed to them when about to ascend into heaven.

"All power is given to Me," He says, "in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and,

\* Acts xv, 28. † i, 8. ‡ vii, 40.

behold, I am with you.”\* Now, let us consider carefully, in the first place, and in some detail the force of the expression, “I, God, am with you,” and then its bearing on the mission of the Apostles. Assuredly, we must take it to mean what it meant in the language of Christ’s day, what the Apostles were accustomed to understand by it, and what, therefore, they must have understood it to mean, when Christ addressed it to themselves. It occurs repeatedly in both the Old and the New Testaments; and it retains everywhere one fixed and well-defined meaning. It implies always, on the part of God, a particular providence, a special watchful care of persons and their interests, so that they shall unfailingly succeed in the undertakings they engage in. Thus we read in Genesis that it was said to Abraham, “God is with thee in all that thou dost.”† And, again, God Himself says to Isaac: “Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of . . . and I will be with thee, and will bless thee.”‡ And, a little later, “Fear not, I am with thee.”§ Of the patriarch Joseph we are told: “And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man in all things. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.”|| So, too, speaking by Isaias, God comforts Israel: “Fear not, for thou art Mine. When thou shalt pass through the waters, I will be with thee, and the rivers shall not cover thee: when thou shalt walk in the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee . . .

\* Matt. xxviii, 20. † xxi, 22. ‡ Gen. xxvi, 3. § Ibid. 24.

|| Gen. xxxix, 2.

Fear not, for I am with thee."\* And in the New Testament the angel Gabriel salutes Mary with the same assurance of divine protection: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."† When Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, he said to Him: "Master, we know that thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do these signs which Thou dost, unless God be with him."‡ St Peter, too, when sent to Cornelius and his kinsmen in Cæsarea, assumes that even the Gentiles are familiar with the phrase and its significance: "Jesus of Nazareth," he says to them, "how God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil: for God was with Him."§ Indeed, the phrase occurs close upon one hundred times in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, in contexts exactly parallel to that in which Christ addresses it to the Apostles; and it invariably bears the meaning we have assigned to it of a particular divine assistance resulting in success.

Furthermore, we find that, when God in Holy Scripture makes choice of anyone for a work or office of peculiar difficulty, which seems to lie beyond the natural strength of the agent He has selected, He is accustomed to inspire confidence and to promise unconditional success by this same expression. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and should bring forth the Children of Israel out of Egypt?" was the objection raised by Moses, when God appointed him to deliver them. And God said to him: "I will be with

\* Isai. xlii, 1-5. † Luke i, 28. ‡ John iii, 2. § Acts x, 38.

thee.”\* Again, when He would have sent Jeremias to the cities of Juda, and the reluctant prophet hesitated to accept the divine call: “Oh, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child”; God’s answer was: “Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise and speak to them all that I command thee. Be not afraid at their presence . . . for, behold, I am with thee, saith the Lord to deliver thee.”† And when Gideon mistrusted his ability to “deliver Israel out of the hand of Madian,” “Behold, my family is the meanest in Manasses, and I am the least of my father’s house, the Lord said to him: I will be with thee, and thou shalt cut off Madian as one man.”‡ And again, in the New Testament, in the midst of Paul’s danger among the Jews of Corinth, the Lord said to him: “Do not fear, but speak, and hold not thy peace: because I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee.”§

But, indeed, there is no need to accumulate further proof. Nothing can be more certain than the invariable meaning in Scripture language—language most familiar to our Lord and His Apostles—of the phrase: “I, God, am with thee.” It signifies always a very special and divine assistance, and, when a commission is given by God which appears to be of unusual difficulty or beyond human strength, the words carry with them a divine promise of complete success.

Now, what was the commission which Christ entrusted to His Apostles, and to which He subjoined the promise, “And, behold, I am with you.” The Gospel tells us: “Go, teach all nations; go, preach the

\* Exod. iii, 2. † Jerem. i, 6. ‡ Judges vi, 15. § Acts xviii, 9.

Gospel to every creature; teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Here, surely, is a commission of more than ordinary difficulty to teach all men all things whatsoever Christ had taught themselves. They, rude, illiterate fishermen, "foolish and slow of heart to believe," are to publish to the world the whole Revelation He had made known to them—not adding to it, not taking from it, not altering in any wise the divine message. And, therefore, He promises "to be with them," to watch over and specially assist them, to secure the complete success of the mission He had imposed upon them. He guarantees them, therefore, against error in the "preaching of the Gospel," in the "teaching of all nations"; He renders them, in a word, infallible.

And again, in the account which St Mark gives us of the same momentous incident we are told of the solemn sanction under which Christ sent His Apostles to preach the Gospel: "He that believeth not," Christ says to them, "shall be condemned."\* He sends them forth, that is, to preach His whole Gospel—"All things whatsoever I have commanded you"; and He binds all men, under the most terrible of penalties, to accept the divine message in its entirety. Men may, indeed, nay, ought to, verify the credentials of His messengers; but men must not examine critically the message itself. They may not accept a part, and reject the rest. They may not give a qualified or limited assent. They may not put from them any or the least portion of the sacred gift. And can we conceive a wise and merciful

\* Mark xvi, 16.



Redeemer imposing such a stringent obligation, under such a dreadful penalty, if any portion of the message, as delivered, may be untrue? When He binds men, under pain of everlasting misery, to accept His Revelation as announced to them, does He not bind Himself to have that Revelation announced to them as it was entrusted to His messengers? Could He command men solemnly, and under threat of eternal loss, to accept unhesitatingly and irrevocably a body of doctrines, part of which—and that part indistinguishable from the rest—might be untrue? And how could falsehood, the possibility, the likelihood, of falsehood be excluded from the teaching of the Apostles, unless infallibility in teaching were conferred upon them?

And if, as is most certain from the New Testament writings, the gift of infallibility were bestowed on the Apostles, the first teachers of the Christian Church, and bestowed on them, not for their own sake, but for the sake of those who were to listen to them and believe, we may infer with equal certainty that the gift was not to perish with the Apostles. Why should Christ so safeguard His revelation, when announcing it to the world—announcing it through the Apostles whom He Himself had taught and trained, and then withdraw the safeguard when the need for it was greater, because the Apostles had passed away? Is it likely, is it credible, even in the absence of all more positive indication of His will, that the successors of the Apostles were to be deprived of a guidance which He had judged necessary for the Apostles themselves? Infallibility was no personal privilege conferred upon them;

it was no mere reward of personal merit. It was granted in favour of those whom they were sent to teach. It was attached to the teaching office. Should it not then continue, while the office itself endures, and while it is all-important for mankind to receive unaltered the message of salvation which Christ announces through it?

And, furthermore, the Church which Christ established is to remain with us, we know, for ever. It is to be one and the same by constitution and specific character when perfected at His second coming as it was on the day when He laid its foundation, and the teaching authority of the Church is of its very essence like the faith authoritatively presented to the faithful for their acceptance and accepted by them. If then the teaching authority which was once infallible becomes liable to error, if the faith once delivered to the saints becomes corrupted in transmission, if the Church's belief to-day is in contradiction with its past, with what semblance of truth can it be said that the Church which Christ founded and the Apostles taught and governed is with us still and will remain with us for ever? And how can identity of teaching and belief be secured and perpetuated unless He makes His Church infallible?

Weighty, however, as such inferences must appear to any dispassionate inquirer, we have even clearer evidence in the direct and explicit promises of Christ. Let us take up again the words in which He pledged Himself to guard the Apostles against error in the ministry of teaching. "And, behold, I am with you—with you all days—even to the consummation of the

world." By the words "I am with you," He promises them, as we have seen, infallibility. By the words, "even to the consummation of the world," He extends that promise of infallibility to the very end of time. For "I am with you" does not restrict the gift to the Apostles only. "We shall be changed,"\* St Paul writes to the Corinthians, of those who shall be still of earth when the last day comes. And again to the Thessalonians: "Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be taken up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ."† Is it not, indeed, quite usual in the language of daily life to speak of those who have passed away and of those who shall come after us in words that taken literally point only to ourselves? If one should say, "We Catholics of the United Kingdom have struggled and made sacrifices for centuries to preserve the faith," or, "We shall struggle and make sacrifices for generations if necessary to secure our religious rights," no shadow of uncertainty could rest upon his meaning. And so, in our text, the words "with you," while applied to the Apostles and declaring their inerraney, may apply also to their successors in the teaching office; and the added clause, "until the consummation of the world," evidently shows that they must be so applied.

Or let us consider that other promise contained in Christ's words to Peter: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."‡ Putting aside for the moment the many controversies which have gathered

\* 1 Cor. xv, 52. † iv, 16. ‡ Matt. xvi, 18.

around the text, there is one point on which all interpreters will be agreed; a forewarning is given of the combats and the perils which the Church must be prepared for, and a promise unqualified and absolute accompanies the warning that she shall not be defeated in the strife: her enemies "shall not prevail against" her. Now when we reflect upon the Church's mission, which is the very reason of her being, we find that a most important office, a fundamental duty, entrusted to her is to announce and safeguard the Christian revelation: she is to "teach all nations . . . until the consummation of the world." She fails in her mission, if she neglects to make the revelation known; she fails no less, if she corrupts the divine message, or allows it to be corrupted in her keeping. How could her enemies more triumphantly "prevail against her" than by effecting an admixture of falsehoods with revealed truth in the Church's common faith, by leading her to preach and believe mere human inventions as the revealed Gospel of Christ? If, therefore, she is not to fail, if her enemies are not to prevail against her, she must be safeguarded effectually against such errors; and she cannot be safeguarded effectually unless she be made infallible in belief and teaching.

Thus we have found, I think, abundant warrant in these Gospel texts for the statement we undertook to demonstrate, that the Christian Church has been dowered by her founder with the gift of doctrinal infallibility. Further passages, too, we might dwell upon, both in the Gospels and in the other New Testament writings which are almost equally convincing. There

is the promise which our Lord makes to His Apostles, "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. . . . He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said unto you."\* There is our Lord's gift to His Church, of which St Paul tells the Ephesians †: "He gave some to be Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints . . . unto the building up of the Body of Christ . . . that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." There is St Paul's description of "the Church of the living God" as "the pillar and ground of truth." ‡ And others not a few—all of them devoid of reasonable meaning if Christ's Church be liable to error in faith and teaching.

And this has ever been the mind of the Christian Church herself. I do not, of course, wish to argue that, because the Church has assumed in her Councils, and proclaimed through her Doctors and Fathers her own doctrinal infallibility, we are bound to accept her testimony about herself. Many a perjured witness has borne testimony to his own veracity. But it will be admitted that the primitive Fathers and the whole early Church were most favourably circumstanced to know what were the most important attributes conferred by Christ upon her; and God's general providence, apart even from special promises, could scarcely permit such a vital and malignant error as the universal

\* John xiv, 16-26.

† iv, 11-14.

‡ I Tim. iii, 15.

and unquestioned belief in Church infallibility, if that belief were false. For it was not a mere speculative opinion; it was a mode of action, a continuous public practice of the Church. From the beginning, and in every age, there have been heresies; and the Church has always dealt with heresy and heretics after the same fashion. She has condemned the heresy finally and irrevocably; and she has excluded heretics, who persisted in their error, from communion with the faithful, from her prayers, her sacrifice, her sacraments—from all the divinely appointed means of salvation which Christ entrusted to her care. Gnostics, Manicheans, Donatists, Arians and Semi-Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians and Eutychians—to mention only some heretics of the first five centuries—were all anathematized and cut off from Church communion, because they refused to accept the doctrinal judgement of the Christian Church. And by what right could the Church expel them from her communion—deprive them, so far as lay with her, of all the divinely instituted means of salvation if she could be herself in error when she declared their doctrines false? Nay, what certainty can we ourselves have that their doctrines were false, that the teachings of Nicea and Ephesus, and Chalcedon and Constantinople are the revealed truth of God, if the Church may err in defining and maintaining that revealed truth? Or in whom shall we recognize any vestige of doctrinal authority, if the solemn judgements of the universal Church may be called in question on the ground that she was mistaken in pronouncing them? But, indeed, the fallibility of the Church in matters of

faith is a purely modern doctrine. "Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; . . . but the Spirit is truth," the principle laid down by Irenæus\* in the second century, has been the principle not merely of the Catholic Fathers in every succeeding century, but of almost all Christian apologists down to our own days. They accept almost unanimously the argument of Bishop Bull in his treatment of the great definition of Nicea, "If in the question of the greatest moment we pretend that all the rulers of the Church fell into total error and persuaded the Christian people of that error, how shall the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ appear, who promised that He would be with the Apostles, and therefore with their successors, 'even to the end of the world'?"† Dr Salmon's view and Dr Salmon's book, which deny infallibility to the Christian Church, have attracted the marked attention of our own time not so much because of the arguments and the ability with which he maintains his theory, as because, in the face of the Bible and of Church history, he ventures to maintain it at all.

"The great argument," he tells us, "by which men are persuaded to believe that there is at least somewhere or other an infallible guide, is that it is incredible that God should leave us without sure guidance when our eternal salvation is at stake."‡ Certainly we Catholics are wholly innocent of the charge; we believe in Church infallibility on no such *a priori* grounds, but because the New Testament assures us that Christ did

\* Adv. Hær. iii, c. xxiv. † Defens. Fid. Nic., præm. s. 2.

‡ p. 97, second edit.

in fact bestow infallibility upon His Church, and because the teaching of the Fathers and the whole history of the Church confirm our reading of the Bible.

And again Dr Salmon writes: "It is plain, then, that God has not endowed His Church with credentials so convincing as irresistibly to command men's assent; and, according to Roman theory, He works a stupendous miracle in vain. To guard Christians against error He works a perpetual miracle in order to provide them with an infallible guide to truth, and yet He neglects to furnish that guide with sufficient proof of his infallibility. . . This one consideration is sufficient to overturn the *a priori* proof that there must be an infallible guide, because we want one," etc.\* But Catholics do not prove "that there must be an infallible guide, because we want one." And, even did we, Dr Salmon's "consideration" would be no refutation of the proof. In Christ, God provided the Jewish world with "an infallible guide to truth"; yet Christ did not come "endowed with credentials so convincing as irresistibly to command men's assent." Would Dr Salmon argue that because men were free to reject and did reject the credentials, therefore Christ was an uncertain guide to truth? And if Christ might be a divine and therefore infallible guide, yet leave men free to accept or reject His claims, why may not the Church which He has founded? Nor is it true that "a stupendous, a perpetual miracle," or indeed any miracle, is needed for Church infallibility: the assertion is due to an entire misconception of what the gift involves.

\* p. 100.



But Dr Salmon goes on: "If in fact the Church be infallible, it is impossible to understand why the Bible was given. . . . If a Christian reading the Bible for himself puts upon it the interpretation which the Church puts upon it, he is still no better off than if he had never looked at it, and had contented himself with the same lessons as taught by the Church; but if he puts upon it a different interpretation from that of the Church, . . . then he is deeply injured by having been allowed to examine for himself."\* Now apply Dr Salmon's argument to the vast majority of his fellow-Churchmen, imperfectly educated members of the Established or Disestablished Church. If they are sincere and humble Christians, surely they will not set up their own judgement against the teaching of their Church, even should they hold with Dr Salmon that their Church is infallible. Is it therefore "impossible to understand why the Bible was given" to them? The truth, of course, is that the "Christian reading the Bible for himself" is indefinitely "better off than if he had never looked at it." It is a poor fallacy to argue, as Dr Salmon does, that he must put upon it either "the interpretation which the Church puts," or else "a different interpretation from that of the Church," As Dr Salmon himself remarks†—and he uses it as a further argument against the infallibility of the Church—the infallible guide has put forth no authorized interpretation of the Scriptures; and so a pious "Christian reading for himself" is not often compelled to make choice between the two interpretations.

\*p. 117. †p. 188.

Then there are large portions of Holy Scripture, historical or affective, which have little or no doctrinal significances for the Church to interpret. Besides Dr Salmon would surely hold that the Bible as the Word of God has an efficacy peculiarly its own which even the infallible teaching of the Church has not. And, in fine, he might as well argue that when Christ was on earth "Bible reading was all risk and no gain," as that such is the case now "if the Church be infallible."

But where "does the gift reside?" Dr Salmon asks. "In the Church diffusive, or only in its head, or in a General Council, or in Pope and Council together?"\* and he proceeds to argue, "The existence of controversy on such a subject is in itself demonstrative of the unreality of the gift." His inference might be admitted, if all the points mentioned by Dr Salmon had really been controverted. But they never were; one only of them was. All Catholic theologians are agreed, as they always have been, that infallibility does reside "in the Church diffusive"; that it does also reside "in Pope and Council together"; that it does not reside "only in her [the Church's] head." How can their controversy about a wholly different matter, the infallibility of a Council without the Pope, be held to unsettle the three points on which they entertain no doubts whatever?

And, further, "Does it not seem strange that a communion possessing the high attribute of infallibility, should make no use of it in the instruction of her people?" † And, again, "The Popes appear to think

\* p. 175. † p. 191.

the gift of infallibility quite too precious for everyday use, and when a disputed question arises it is the hardest matter to obtain a decision on it from the infallible authority";\* or, to put Dr Salmon's whole argument very briefly, the Church is not infallible, does not herself believe in her infallibility, since she uses the gift so rarely, and is so reluctant to use it. He might just as well have contended that, when God spoke to His prophets, we need expect no exercise of infallibility, because He spoke so seldom; nor when Christ preached to the Samaritans, because He taught amongst them with apparently considerable reluctance. Indeed, he might on the same grounds, and with equal reasonableness, cast doubts on the reality and truth of the revelation made to mankind through Christ, a unique fact in the world's history, in spite of man's great need and God's earnest wish for man's salvation. And not only is his argument illogical and inconclusive, but it rests, as so much else in Dr Salmon's book will be found to rest, on a complete misunderstanding of the Catholic position. For Church infallibility is not exercised only in the solemn and rare pronouncements of supreme ecclesiastical authority. It is in daily operation, preserving the ever-living faith of the whole body of believers, watching over the unceasing labour of the whole body of divinely-appointed teachers, guarding the universal Church—teachers and taught, in their controversies and doubts concerning the faith—in the continuous process by which some of her dogmas are being ever more clearly apprehended, or developed, or

\* p. 249.

almost silently defined. The gift of infallibility was quite as active, when the judgement of the Universal Church was maturing on such questions as Papal Supremacy and the Immaculate Conception, as when Nicæ defined the Divinity of Christ, or Ephesus condemned Nestorius. And hence, because of our respect for Dr Salmon's attainments and ability, we read with wonder what to Catholics must seem the childish statement, in part so true, in part so foolish, but all intended by him as crushing sarcasm, "She [the Catholic Church] has no rule for determining controversies save that by which non-theological disputes are determined, namely, she lets the disputants fight it out; if, owing to the number or ability of its advocates, one side gets a predominance, she will give it encouragement; and if within four hundred years, more or less, its opponents are reduced to absolute insignificance, then she will pronounce their opinions false."\* Did Dr Salmon really believe that Nestorianism, Arianism, Eutychianism, Lutheranism, Jansenism were only then condemned, when their adherents "were reduced to absolute insignificance"? And did he not see that the guidance of the Holy Spirit could manifest itself as clearly in controversy and discussion carried on for many years in the Church diffusive, as in controversy and discussion carried on through the sessions of a few months or years of an Œcumenical Council?

Such is the general temper and cogency of Dr Salmon's reasoning; and Dr Salmon's book is by far the most popular modern attack on the infallibility of the Church.

P. FINLAY, S.J.

\* p. 261.

## CHAPTER IX

## Extra Ecclesiam Salus Nulla

PROBABLY there is no axiom so misunderstood by outsiders as this one, that "outside the Church there is no salvation." A leading Protestant divine is reported to have recently remarked upon "the uncharitableness of Romanists, who are obliged by their creed to regard all who die outside the Roman Church as in hell." One might have supposed that a leading Protestant divine would know better. Unfortunately, we have only too much reason to know that such men are not trained theologians. They take abstract principles and saddle us with their own muddle-headed application of these principles to concrete facts. "Romanists" are not only not bound to hold any such opinion, but they are bound to hold exactly the opposite. This may seem a paradox, but it is not. It is our Lord Himself who is responsible for the principle when He said, *He that believeth not, shall be damned.*\*

Does this apply to *all* men or only to *some* men? That it is not of universal application is clear from those other words of our Lord, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*† We may therefore accept this principle on the authority of our Lord, that error in *good faith* does not involve any moral guilt. It is a principle accepted by all Catholic theologians that no man

\* Mark xvi, 16. † Luke xxiii, 24.

loses his soul except through his own fault and by reason of moral guilt. How far then do those who are not, as a matter of fact, within the fold of the Catholic Church incur moral guilt? Take the millions of negroes in darkest Africa; are Christians bound to believe that all these millions of souls are to be condemned because they do not believe a message that has never been delivered to them? They have never heard of Christ, and therefore cannot be said to have rejected Him. These poor, ignorant savages have a conscience, they have a dim perception of the laws of right and wrong, and they may blunder lamentably in their application of these abstract principles to concrete facts. Still they are not to blame. So long as they do their best, they are not guilty of sinning against the light. Their lights may be very poor, but they are the only lights they have; and so long as they try to do what is right as far as it is known to them, they are not out of the way of salvation. God is merciful and just, and will judge these people by the only law He has been pleased to make known to them.

St Thomas lays it down that the children of unbelievers may, and in fact often do, receive the grace of baptism without receiving the sacrament. He says, "When [a boy] begins to have the use of reason, . . . the first thing that occurs to him to think of is to deliberate about himself, and if he orders himself to his right end, he will by grace obtain remission of original sin."\* And Cajetan, in his *Commentary*, defines the due ordering to a proper end thus: "If he concludes

\* Summa, 1a, 2æ, qu. lxxxvi, art. 6.

that real good in general—*in confuso*—is to be sought after, as is the case at that age, he has thought well of himself by fixing his end in true beatitude although imperfectly and incoherently.”\*

Now the further question arises as to how far Catholics are bound to hold that for those outside the Roman Church there is no salvation. Catholics are not bound to believe anything of the kind. The question resolves itself into the other question, how far those who are outside the Roman Church are in good faith or not. Now, no “Romanist” is bound to believe that they are not in good faith. The presumption is that they are in good faith; and here comes in the distinction between *material* and *formal heresy*. A man may be mistaken in his views, but people are not to be condemned for making honest mistakes, but for committing sins. *Formal* heresy implies that a man with full knowledge and consent does what his conscience tells him to be wrong. When theologians speak of heretics, they use the words in the latter sense. Cardinal Newman, in his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, † has dealt with the question in such a masterly way that it is impossible to improve upon what he says. Remarking upon the fact that we must not read into papal definitions more than is intended, he then says:

In these cases, which in a true sense may be called the Pope’s *negative* enunciation, the opportunity of a legitimate minimizing lies in the intensely concrete character of the matters condemned; in his affirmative enunciations a like opportunity is afforded by this being more or less abstract.

\* *Comm.* in l. c.      † Sec. ix, n. 11.

Indeed, excepting such as relate to persons, that is, to the Trinity in Unity, the Blessed Virgin, the saints and the like, all the dogmas of Pope or council are but general, and so far in consequence admit of exceptions in their actual application, these exceptions being determined either by other authoritative utterances or by the scrutinizing vigilance, acuteness and subtlety of the *Schola Theologica*. One of the most remarkable instances of what I am insisting on is found in the dogma which no Catholic can ever think of disputing, viz., that "out of the Church and out of the faith is no salvation." Not to go to Scripture, it is the doctrine of St Ignatius, St Irenæus, St Cyprian in the first three centuries, as of St Augustine and his contemporaries in the fourth and fifth. It has never been other than an elementary truth of Christianity, and the present Pope has proclaimed it as all Popes, doctors and bishops before him. But that truth has two aspects according as the force of the negative falls upon "Church" or "salvation." The main sense is that there is no other communion or so-called Church but the Catholic in which are stored the promises, the sacraments and other means of salvation; the other and derived sense is, that no one can be saved who is not in that one and only Church. But it does not follow, because there is no Church but one which has the evangelical gifts and privileges to bestow, that therefore no one can be saved without the intervention of that one Church. Anglicans quite understand this distinction; for on the one hand their article says: "They are to be held accursed [*anathematizandi*] that presume to say that every man shall be saved *by* [in] the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature"; while on the other hand they hold and speak of the doctrine of the "uncovenanted mercies of God." The latter doctrine in its Catholic form is the doctrine of "invincible ignorance," or that it is possible to belong to the soul of the Church with-



out belonging to its body; and at the end of 1,800 years it is has been formally and authoritatively put forward by the present Pope (the first Pope who, I suppose, has done so) on the very same occasion on which he has repeated the fundamental doctrine of exclusive salvation itself. It is to the purpose here to quote his words; they occur in the course of his Encyclical addressed to the Bishops of Italy under date of August 10, 1863: "We and you know that those who lie under invincible ignorance as regards our most holy religion, and who diligently observing the natural law and its precepts which are graven by God on the hearts of all, and prepared to obey God, lead a good and upright life, are able by the operation of the power of divine light and grace to obtain eternal life." Who would, at first sight, gather from the wording of so forcible a universal, that an exception to its operation such as this, so distinct, and for what we know, so very far-reaching, was consistent with holding it?

A. H. MATHEW

## CHAPTER X

## On Schism and on Ignorance

I. *Schism*

THAT schism is a sin appears to be only partially realized outside the Catholic Church. An endeavour will be made in this chapter to explain (1) what is meant by schism, and (2) what is its effect upon those who incur its guilt.

The word "schism" is derived from the Greek *σχίσμα*, which signifies a split or rent in a garment. In this sense the phrase is used in St Luke v, 26, St Matthew ix, 16, and St Mark ii, 21. A second meaning of the word is a division in sentiment or opinion, and the Greek is thus rendered in St John viii, 43, where we read: "There arose a dissension among the people, because of Him." In St John vi and vii the same word is used to describe a similar difference of opinion. St Paul warns the Corinthians\* "that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you; and that you be perfect in the same mind and the same judgement." The Apostle's advice referred to dissensions among the faithful with regard to favourite spiritual teachers, some converts preferring to range themselves under Paul, others under Cephas, and so forth. That the dissensions had no reference to matters of doctrine or even of discipline is clear from

\* 1 Cor. i, 10.

other passages—the simple issue was one of personal preference for individual teachers.

Other texts showing similar uses of the Greek word for “schism” might be quoted. But the meaning is never that of schism in the ecclesiastical or technical sense. According to the usage of Fathers and theologians of the Church, schism may be defined as formal separation from the visible unity of the Fold of Christ.

And here it will be best to quote what St Thomas Aquinas says in the *Summa*:\* “Schismatics, in the strict sense or meaning of the term, are those persons who, of their own free will and intention, separate themselves from the unity of the Church. This unity of the Church consists in the connexion of its members with each other, and of all the members with the Head. Now, this Head is Christ, whose representative in the Church is the Supreme Pontiff. And therefore the name of *schismatics* is given to those who refuse to be under the Supreme Pontiff and to communicate with the members of the Church subject to him.”

It is not within our present scope to deal with the graver sin of heresy, which is the denial of any divinely revealed truth, and which, since heresy excludes *ipso facto* from the Church, necessarily involves schism. Schism does not, of necessity, involve heresy, for a schismatic may hold every article of the faith. But at the same time it is liable to lead on to heresy; and many heresies have actually originated in schism. Heresy is the sin opposed to the virtue of faith; schism is the sin opposed to the virtue of charity. For

\* 2a 2æ, qu. xxxix, a. 1.

it is in the bond of charity that true believers are bound together in the mystical body of Christ, over which He presides eternally as Head. Within the Church itself there can be no schism, for, to use another figure, the Church is the seamless robe in which there can be no rent. Schism then is a departure from the unity of the Church.

The Church is not injured by schisms. They are to the Church as severed limbs are to the tree. The amputation, far from weakening or involving loss, may often strengthen and improve the parent stem. The weakness and the loss involved by schism fall upon those guilty of the sin. A severed branch may be said to bear a relation to the tree of which it originally formed part. But the relation is that of a deceased member to his family: he is no longer a member of the domestic circle.

The power of conferring some of the sacraments is not forfeited by schism, though the right of conferring any of them is lost. The Donatist heretics possessed valid orders; their bishops could confirm and ordain; their priests could celebrate Mass. Absolution and the powers of excommunication and of granting indulgences cannot be exercised validly without valid jurisdiction, which schismatics do not possess. There are, however, exceptional cases in which the Church may allow the power of absolving to be exercised by all validly ordained priests, even by such as are in heresy, and by such as have incurred suspension, or any kind of irregularity. An exceptional case in point would be one of a penitent sinner, who

is believed to be at the point of death, when no priest possessing valid jurisdiction is at hand. The sick man may at such a time be validly absolved by anyone in priest's orders, not only from all sins, but also from all ecclesiastical censures.

From what has been said it will be apparent that individuals, who are conscious that they are members of a schismatical religion, are bound to terminate the schism, in their own persons, without delay. Responsibility for schism belongs not only to the entire schismatical denomination, but also to each of its members; and no individual must wait for the return of the whole of his denomination or even of a part of it to Catholic unity. The hopes of persons delaying their own reconciliation till their whole sect is reconciled are sure to prove illusory, and the Church cannot possibly sanction their position. To remain in schism for the sake of inducing others at some unknown date to leave it, is conduct which can only be compared to the infatuation of persons who, standing on a raft and desiring to reach a certain harbour, perceive the greater security of a well-equipped ship bound for the same port, yet refuse to be taken on board because some of their number regard the raft as a sufficiently safe vessel. No doubt their decision to risk their lives in order to remain with friends is an act of devotion which all must admire. But here the simile breaks down; for in the matter of eternal salvation each person stands alone. We may sacrifice the life of the body in the desire to save the body or the soul of another. But the life of the soul must not be risked even for the salvation of mul-

titudes of other souls. The love of God, who is the origin and also the destiny of the soul, must be paramount. Our first duty is towards God, and in uniting ourselves in charity to the mystical body of Christ we simply perform an act of obedience to an elementary precept of His law.

## 2. *Ignorance*

By ignorance in general we mean want of knowledge or the condition of being ignorant, which may mean either destitute of knowledge, or unconscious, or unaware of a certain fact or truth. St Thomas Aquinas provides us with an even simpler explanation. He draws a distinction between nescience and ignorance, describing the former as simple absence of knowledge; the latter as absence of knowledge in one capable of acquiring it.

We have to deal with ignorance of the truth of the Catholic religion and the consequences or effects of that ignorance. I cannot do better than quote from a concisely written article in a well-known work\* which puts the whole subject within the compass of a nutshell:

Ignorance may easily involve sin, since a person is bound to use all reasonable means in order that he may have the knowledge necessary for the performance of his duties. Thus all men are bound to learn, so far as they can, the general principles of religion and morals; and a man sins grievously who remains from his own negligence in the belief that a false religion is true, or that an unlawful cause of action which he is pursuing is really lawful. The degree of his own sin differs according as the obligations which he does not fulfil, through

\* *The Catholic Dictionary*, p. 466.

ignorance, are more or less serious, and according to the amount of negligence or malice which his ignorance implies. Thus while a man is never excused from sin of omission or commission on the plea of ignorance which he can be fairly expected to overcome, this vincible ignorance, as it is called, admits of subdivisions representing different grades of guilt. A man may use some, but not enough, industry in removing his ignorance, which in such case is described as "simply vincible"; he may take hardly any pains to overcome it, then his ignorance is termed "crass"; he may positively wish to remain ignorant in order that he may sin more freely or continue in a sinful condition, in which case his ignorance is known as "affected."

All vincible ignorance of things of which knowledge is required by a man's duty to God and his neighbour is in itself sinful. Thus, a medical man who practises his profession without the necessary knowledge sins, even though he may, by chance, do no injury to his patients. He at least jeopardizes their health. Similarly a spiritual physician, who attempts to practise his profession either by preaching or administering the holy sacraments without the requisite knowledge to which persons accepting his ministrations are entitled, sins grievously, inasmuch as he jeopardizes the spiritual health of his people. Now, with regard to sins ignorantly committed: invincible ignorance altogether excuses from sin, because no man can incur moral guilt without any intention, direct or remote, to transgress the Divine Law. A Protestant, for instance, who looks upon Catholicism as idolatrous, and cannot be expected, considering his education and other circumstances,

to think otherwise, is guiltless, so far, in the sight of God. So, again, if a person is aware that he sins, but is invincibly ignorant of circumstances which aggravate or change the nature of his crime, he is responsible only so far as he knows, or may know, what he is doing. Every man may know the first principles of the moral law and the most obvious deductions from them, but he may be invincibly ignorant of certain precepts which belong to the natural law of right and wrong.

Supposing that a man is responsible for his ignorance, it may still diminish the guilt of the sins which he ignorantly commits. Such is the case with ignorance "simply vincible," and even, though in a less degree, with "crass" ignorance. When, however, a man remains in ignorance in order that he may have an easier life or sin more freely, he is guilty of affected ignorance, which has the effect of increasing the voluntary character of his act and consequently of its sin.

It is thus evident that ignorance may excuse a man for living in idolatry, or heresy, or schism. He is then regarded as "in good faith." It by no means follows that because a man is invincibly ignorant of the truth of Catholicism he is an ignorant man. He may be a man of high culture and great learning, and yet be invincibly ignorant, or unaware, that the Catholic Church is the religion of Jesus Christ. His good faith, which consists in his fidelity to conscience, unites him then to the soul of the Church, and he is thus in the way of salvation, independently of the erroneous opinions he may inculpably hold. Men of great erudition are to be found among the advocates of all kinds of false



religions, and we may regard all such as among the invincibly ignorant and therefore blameless souls who are guiltless of the sins of heresy and schism in God's sight though separated from the visible unity of the divine Church.

A. H. MATHEW

## IV—APPENDIX

England and the Holy See in the  
Middle Ages\*

IN treating of the relation between England and Rome in the Middle Ages, I shall take the widest possible sweep of time, and shall understand the Middle Ages to comprise the entire period from the conversion of England in 597 to the repudiation of the Pope in 1534; subdividing this period again into two portions: the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church, which may be regularly referred to the years 597-1066; and the history of the Church of the later Middle Ages, from 1066 to 1534.

And I shall lay down the following proposition at the outset as the text of all that I have to teach:

That an *Ecclesia Anglicana* not in conscious dependence on the Holy See in spirituals is a phenomenon unknown to history until the reign of Henry VIII.

In attempting to illustrate this proposition I shall adopt the plan of reproducing as far as possible the language of original documents, and letting them speak for themselves.

In our own day a wealth of new material of this kind has been discharged upon us, which we have not yet had time entirely to digest; and we owe a

\* Reproduced by the author's permission from an American periodical.

debt of gratitude, in this respect as in so many others, to the characteristic generosity of the late Pope, Leo XIII, for laying open the Vatican Library to the inspection of scholars from all parts of Europe. Dr Bliss, the scholar deputed to represent England, has already published two or three volumes of a series which, when it is complete, will provide "an English calendar of all entries in the Papal Regesta of the Middle Ages which illustrate the history of Great Britain and Ireland."

In business transactions it is necessary either to keep a copy of every letter that is sent out or to note down the substance of it for future reference. And when we speak of the Papal Regesta we refer to a series of more than two thousand volumes containing such entries: they are arranged in the order of successive pontificates, and cover the long period from the year 1198 to the end of the sixteenth century.

Whenever Dr Bliss has come upon any note referring to Great Britain or Ireland, the compiler has entered it in his Calendar, omitting only such formal clauses as are frequently repeated and such details as may be studied in printed books. This, we need scarcely say, is the new method of studying history—to have recourse as far as possible to original documents and to study them from a psychological point of view.

These particular materials belong, of course, to the second half of our period; but they have only so recently been made accessible to the public that we

have thought it best to direct the special attention of the reader to them at the outset, in order that he may the better appreciate the illustrations we shall quote later on.

What better guide could you have to the relation between two individuals than to have access to their secret drawers and to con their letters? And so in regard to England and the Holy See our preconceived notions of their relations must give place to the force of visible facts and the testimony of ocular demonstration.

Suppose, for instance, a friend should say to you, "All along the centuries before the Reformation the Church of England was a national Church, managing her own affairs, and most jealous of advice, which the Pope was too ready to give, and of interference on his part, which was throughout consistently resented."

Is that statement based upon fact, or is it the language of prejudice, that is, of judgement apart from evidence? Let us go to the Vatican archives and see. Here, for instance, is an entry in the year 1291. Edward I is on the throne of England and Nicholas IV in the papal chair.

"1291, 8 Id. Mar. Orvieto [f. 8].

"Reservation, collation and provision, at the King's request to Master Walter de Langeton, of a canonry and prebend of York, with licence to retain the Churches of St Michael-on-Wyre, in the diocese of York, and Croston, in that of Lichfield, and the canonry and prebend of Turtok in Hastings. Concurrent mandate to the Bishop of Ely, the Dean of St Paul's, and Master Geoffrey de Vecano."

Here we find an English king asking for the promotion of his friend to a variety of benefices.

This is startling; but we must shake off our mere subjectivity, surrender ourselves to fact, and cultivate the habit of saying what we see and not merely of repeating what is expected of us. Only so can we hope for an extension of that Catholic unity which every earnest believer now desiderates and which our Lord Himself requires.

One further instance shall be cited from the same source. In this case the date is 1217, Henry III being King of England at that time, and Honorius III Pope.

“1217 4 Id. Maii, Lateran [f. 108 d].

“Mandate to the Prior and Chapter of Durham to proceed to the election of a bishop.”

These two illustrations will serve to show the kind of evidence we shall seek to produce in order to demonstrate the reality of that continuous intercourse in spirituals which obtained between England and Rome throughout the long period of the Middle Ages.

### I—*The Anglo-Saxon Church, 597-1066*

THE Roman mission to England landed in the Isle of Thanet about Easter time, A.D. 597; what was left of the Britons and the old British Church being confined at that time to a comparatively small number, who had been pushed across the island and compelled to make their home in what is now known as Wales and Cornwall.

The relation between the Roman mission in England and the old British Church need not detain us long:

the story of the meeting between St Augustine and the British clergy has been finally put on one side as legendary; but what does appear to be true is that the deadly hatred on the part of the Britons to their Saxon conquerors constituted the main if not the only obstacle in the way of coalition. For the rest, so eminent an authority as the Abbé Duchesne may be left to state once for all the relation of the British to the English Church and of both Churches to the Church of Rome:

“The English Church has, it is true, succeeded in the great British Island to a Celtic Church, but this succession is purely one of date; there is no link between one of these establishments and the other. . . The British Church is not the mother of the English, but only an older sister, and that a sister who is hostile.” There is no continuity between the two.

While in regard to England “history stands firm, and she is apostolic only if she is Roman.” “The English Church is clearly a colony of the Roman Church.”\*

Roman missionaries appear to have made their settlements after the same fashion as the military colonists; that is, they did not merely plant a colony and then move on; they took up their abode in their new home and then threw out further colonies.

So in this case St Augustine began by converting Kent, and settled himself down in Canterbury; and at once Canterbury became a little Rome.

This bears directly upon the question before us: the relation of the English Church to Rome is illustrated in

\* *Églises Séparées*, pp. 1-11.

this first moment of the mission by several facts. First, it was in the brain of a Pope of Rome, Pope Gregory, that the project of converting England was conceived; it was by his orders and under his sanction that St Augustine put this project into execution; and, speaking more particularly, it was by virtue of power conferred upon him by the Pope that Augustine created twelve suffragan bishoprics in the south and twelve in the north of England.

Now contemplate these two men for the moment as nerve centres in the situation. Did Gregory the Great henceforth regard the English mission as something apart and distinct, with no lines of communication between itself and Rome? "To you, brother," said the Pope to St Augustine, "by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ shall be subject not only those bishops you shall ordain, but likewise all the priests in Britain." Gregory understood and expressly declared, as the Popes had done before him, that where there was any question of fault "he knew not what bishop was not subject to him"; and it is equally plain that St Augustine, acting as he did from the very first under the direction of Pope Gregory, coincided absolutely in his views.

We are not forgetting, of course, that it was seventy years later when the whole Church of the English first consented to recognize in Archbishop Theodore the Primate of All England: that does not touch the point we are now pressing; it merely exhibits one important stage in the later history of the mission. What we have so far succeeded in demonstrating is that at this

first moment and in this initial stage of the project the mission of St Augustine to England in 597 was Roman at the outset and continued in conscious relationship to Rome immediately afterwards.

One or two passages from the preface to the first volume of Dean Hook's famous work on *The Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury* will serve better than any mere passing reference of our own to illustrate what we have already said in reference to those new materials which have been discharged upon us in recent times, and which have produced what amounts almost to a revolution in the study of history.

Writing in the year 1860, he declares that "such a history could not have been attempted a few years ago . . . owing to the difficulty which existed of obtaining access to the original authorities. This difficulty has now been in a great measure removed. The *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, published by Her Majesty's command in 1848, . . . has placed within reach the writings of Gildas, Nennius, Bede, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Asser, Florence of Worcester, Simeon of Durham . . . and the *Annales Cambriæ*."

He then goes on to refer to the famous Rolls series, *The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland*, then in course of publication. In the latter, he says, some important documents have been given to the public for the first time. Allusion is also made to *The Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, edited by Thorpe, which "contains the whole body of ecclesiastical law, as it existed in Anglo-Saxon times, together with the laws of Anglo-Saxon Kings from Ethelbert



to Canute"; the laws of William the Conqueror, the laws of Edward the Confessor and the laws ascribed to Henry I.

Finally the Dean alludes to the profound learning of Mr Kemble, whose *Codex Diplomaticus Alvi Saxonici*, published in 1839-1848, has taken its place among the standard works of the age, and contains perhaps the most remarkable collection of ancient documents possessed by any country. We shall go on to quote presently from Kemble; meantime let it not be forgotten that the proposition we are seeking to illustrate stands firm and is intended to govern all we say—that an *Ecclesia Anglicana* not in conscious dependence on the Holy See in spirituals is a phenomenon unknown to history before the reign of Henry VIII.

When a great generalization such as this is put forward, it should be supported by authorities of the first rank, and Kemble, as we have seen, may be regarded as such an authority on the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church. With a bias, then, altogether away from the Holy See, how does he regard our relations to that See in the period under consideration?

"Saxon England," he writes, "was essentially the child of Rome; whatever obligations any of her kingdoms may have been under to the Celtic missionaries—and I cannot persuade myself that these were at all considerable—she certainly had entirely lost sight of them at the close of the seventh and the commencement of the eighth centuries."

Again, "There is not the slightest doubt that, despite the Celtic clergy, the Anglo-Saxon Church looked

with affection and respect to Rome as the source of its own being.”

One further quotation from the same author. In allusion to the gift and acceptance of the pallium in the Anglo-Saxon Church as testifying to the exercise of Papal jurisdiction in this land, he writes: “The question is not whether the Roman See had the right to make the demand, but whether, usurpation or not, it was acquiesced in and admitted by the Anglo-Saxon Church, and on that point there can be no dispute.”

St Augustine received instructions from Pope Gregory in 597 to be consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury by Vergilius, Bishop of Arles, in France; and we have already said that the same Pope prescribed the number and distribution of Sees to be established by Augustine in England.

A.D. 610. The first Bishop of London (Mellitus) was present at a Council held in Rome; he signed its decrees, and brought back a copy of them “to the Churches of the English, to be presented and observed.”

A.D. 625. Pope Honorius writes to the Archbishop of Canterbury: “When either of the Prelates of Canterbury or York shall depart this life, the survivor . . . shall have power to ordain another . . . that it might not always be necessary to travel to the city of Rome or so great a distance by sea and land in order to ordain an archbishop.”

A.D. 668. All the bishops of England were placed by Pope Vitalian under the jurisdiction of Theodore, a native of Tarsus in Greece, Archbishop of Canterbury.

A.D. 735. A second Metropolitan See was established at York by Pope Gregory III.

A.D. 771. Lichfield was erected into an Archiepiscopal See by Pope Adrian.

A.D. 785. A Council was held at Calcuith, where the legates of Adrian assisted, their names being Gregory Bishop of Ostia, and Theophylact Bishop of Todi. The eleventh canon of this Council runs thus:

“As the King is lord paramount in the State, so the Bishop’s authority is supreme in matters relating to the government and discipline of the Church.”

A.D. 795. The grant by which Lichfield had become an Archiepiscopal See was revoked by Pope Leo III; and the Church of Canterbury recovered that precedence which it has ever since possessed.

England at this time, it should be remembered, was divided into several kingdoms, and it was at the request of one of these sovereigns—Kenulph, King of Mercia—that the Pope took this step. “We have bestowed on the Archbishop,” writes Pope Leo, “such a prelateship that if any of his subjects—kings, princes or people—transgress his precept in the Lord, let him excommunicate him till he is penitent.”\*

A.D. 803. The Council of Cloveshoe declares:

“The Apostolic Pope [Leo III] has sent into Britain an authoritative precept of his prerogative, commanding the honour of St Augustine’s See to be restored in all its completeness with all its parishes [dioceses] just as St Gregory the Apostle and Master of our nation arranged it.”†

\*Haddan and Stubbs, iii, 539.

†Ibid. p. 543.

We may here remind our readers that the "Forged Decretals," which are sometimes said to have betrayed England as well as other countries into a state of dependence on the Holy See, did not appear until the middle of this century; that is, not until some time between the year 845 and 857—that is not until 250 years after the landing of St Augustine; about the same length of time as that which separates ourselves of to-day from the period of Cromwell and the Commonwealth; and not until 400 years after the Council of Chalcedon, in which the Pope of the day is recognized as the successor of St Peter and the "Guardian of the Vine."

It was in this century, too, about the year 854, that the tax known as Rome-Feoh, or as it is now named Peter's-pence, was instituted by the legislature.

A.D. 900-1000. In this century we come upon the famous name of Dunstan who, in conjunction with the King, petitions the reigning Pope to sanction the reform of abuses in the Church; and in granting his sanction the Pope addresses King Edgar as "the illustrious King and his most dear son."

Thus, whereas the *Ecclesia Anglicana* began to exist in the year 597 and was manifestly in direct communion with the Holy See, and in dependence upon it in spirituals, it is certain that this conscious dependence remained a continuous fact up to the reign of the Conqueror, 1066.

## II

A.D. 1066-1534

WE now go on to consider the second half of the period we are reviewing, viz., A.D. 1066-1534.

As in the case of the Anglo-Saxon Church we supported our generalization by authorities of the first rank, so here we shall quote the deliberate judgement of distinguished scholars, such as John Richard Green and Professor Maitland.

1. Mr Boyce ranks the former above Milman in accuracy, brackets him as equal with Macaulay, and puts him a little below Grote, while the late Bishop of Oxford (Dr Stubbs), whom Freeman used to describe as "our great scholar," says of Mr Green that he "possessed in no scanty measure all the gifts that contribute to the making of a great historian. He combined, so far as the history of England is concerned, a complete and firm grasp of the subject in its unity and integrity, with a wonderful command of details, and a thorough sense of perspective and proportion. All his work was real and original work . . . there was no department of our national records that he had not studied, and I think I may say mastered. . . . Like other people, he made mistakes sometimes; but scarcely ever does the correction of his mistakes affect either the essence of the picture or the force of the argument. . . ."

What, then, is the deliberate verdict of Green upon this question?

"Compare," he writes, "1480 with 1580, and set the Church of the one time fairly against that of the other.

In the one case we have an ecclesiastical body forming a member of a sort of federation of similar bodies united under the supremacy [really under the actual rule] of the Pope, with a legislature of its own, exemption in many points from the Common Law, independent power of decreeing dogmas and enforcing them by its own courts and the like. . .”

And Professor Maitland, after careful research, confirms this position. “No tie,” he writes, “of an ecclesiastical or spiritual kind bound the Bishop of Chichester to the Bishop of Carlisle, except that which bound them both to the French or Spanish bishops.” And again, “Papal justice knew no geographical bounds at least in the Occident.”

Observe here a coincidence which is undesigned, and therefore the more forcible: John Richard Green has been dead twenty years now, but the independent and more recent researches of Professor Maitland precisely confirms his statement; and the pre-Reformation Church in the West, in their view, comprises a number of similar bodies bound together in a sort of federation, and united under the actual rule of the Pope. Meantime, since the death of Green, the documents we are now possessed of have come to light, and serve to corroborate his position.

2. Here, for instance, is an entry in Vol. VII of the *Regesta*, A.D. 1198.

“[8 Kal. Maii] St Peter’s, Rome [f. 29].

“Inhibition to the Archbishop on complaint by the prior and convent of Canterbury, from building a new chapel at Lambeth, contrary to the prohibitions of

Popes Urban and Clement; with order to pull down what is built, and suspension of the clergy who officiate in it.

“Concurrent letters to the suffragans of the province.”

Again:

“1198, 2 Kal. Junii, St Peter’s, Rome [f. 57].

“Letter to the King of England in answer to his petitions, which the Pope will grant so far as possible: and exhorting him to keep peace with France.”

“A.D. 1202, 10 Kal. Aprilis. Lateran [f. 6].

“Letter to the Bishop of Worcester in answer to his question as to what is to be done in the difficulty he has in bringing suits to satisfactory conclusion by reason of the border warfare between England and Wales, so that a person cited is unable to appear. The Pope directs him in such cases to appeal to himself.”

“A.D. 1233, 2 Id. Maii, Lateran [f. 25].

“Monition to the King of France to make peace with the King of England, which the Pope has ordered the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishops of Paris, Winchester and Salisbury to promote.

“Concurrent letter to the King of England.”

“A.D. 1234, 2 Id. Feb., Lateran [f. 148d].

“To the King of France asking for safe conduct of the Bishops of Winchester and Exeter and others to come to him to treat of peace.

“The like to the King of England.”

“A.D. 1243, 3 Non. Nov. Lateran [f. 36d].

Indult to the Bishop of Winchester to remove the

holders of benefices, which were resigned by their former holders on condition that they should be given to their sons, nephews or kinsfolk."

One more entry during the pontificate of Urban IV may here be set down:

"A.D. 1261, 10 Kal. Mar. Viterbo [f. 13].

"Mandate to all Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Deans, Archdeacons and other prelates to celebrate the feast of St Richard, Bishop of Chichester, on 3 Non. April, he having been placed in the catalogue of Saints on 5 Kal. Feb. after examination of his life and miracles, under Alexander IV, the cause having been promoted by the King and magnates of England. Relaxation of a year and forty days of enjoined penance\* is granted to those who visit his tomb on the feast itself, and of forty days to those who visit it during the succeeding fortnight."

We shall contribute some further illustration belonging to the thirteenth century; meantime what has been set down here presents a suggestive picture of the relations of England, and we may also say of France, to the Holy See in the earlier years of the period we are considering, that is, between A.D. 1066 and 1266; and the use to which we put the evidence of this new material is parallel in its nature to the attitude of the higher critics towards the life and literature of the Old Testament.

Twenty years ago, before these documents saw the light, men could say in good faith what they cannot allow themselves to say now. The enterprise of reunion

\* i.e., Indulgences.



is progressive; new materials may throw light upon old questions, and consequently causes which appeared hopeless even a quarter of a century ago may be bright with hope in the altered circumstances of to-day.

## B. 1266-1300

I now go on to quote from *Papal Letters*, vol. 1, A.D. 1198-1304.

“A.D. 1278, Non. Maii, St Peter’s [f. 20d].

“Absolution of Hugh, Bishop of Ely, from his promise and oath made at his consecration by Pope Alexander, to visit the Apostolic See every three years.”

“A.D. 1278, Kal. Oct., Viterbo [f. 51d].

“Indult to Queen Eleanor to have a portable altar, at which her chaplains may celebrate divine offices.”

“A.D. 1279, 12 Kal. Oct., Viterbo [f. 183].

“Exhortation to the Archbishop of Canterbury to abstain from contests as to the carrying of the cross, and commending to him the new Archbishop of York, who is coming to his See with the Pope’s benediction, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s rights remaining untouched. [Marginal note] *Ista litta fuit missa clausa.*”

“A.D. 1286, 5 Kal. Junii, St Sabina’s [f. 135d].

“Indult to the Abbot of St Augustine’s, Canterbury, to grant dispensations to his monks to meet, not in his room, but in the hall, and there eat with magnates and other guests and friends; and when on the business of the monastery to conform themselves in the matter of food to those with whom they may be.”

“A.D. 1289, 4 Kal. Aug., Rieti [f. 178]. Ibid.

“Faculty to Henry de Lascy, Earl of Lincoln, to

have a portable altar. Licence to the same to choose his confessor, who shall enjoin penance and give him absolution except in cases where the Apostolic See ought to be consulted."

"A.D. 1290, 15 Kal. Aug., Orvieto [f. 57d].

"Mandate on the Queen's petition to the Bishop of Winchester, the Abbot of Westminster and the Dean of Bayeux, to appoint one of her clerks to a canonry and prebend of Dublin."

"A.D. 1291, 7 Kal. Mar., Orvieto [f. 1].

"Licence to Edmund, King Henry's son, to choose his confessor, who shall give him absolution in all cases not reserved to the Apostolic See."

"A.D. 1296, 2 Kal. Nov., St Peter's [f. 115d].

"Faculty to Walter, bishop elect of Coventry and Lichfield, who, with the bishops of Albano and Palestrina, is engaged in affairs in France, to put off his consecration until a month after next Christmas, and then to be consecrated out of England, and by any bishops he pleases in communion with 'the Apostolic See.'"

"A.D. 1301, Kal. Maii, Lateran [f. 17d].

"Indult to Edward I, that his clerks and lay persons of his household may confess to his chaplain who shall give absolution [as above].

"Ibid: The like to Prince Edward, [f. 18].

"Ibid: The like to Queen Margaret.

"Ibid: Indult to the King to choose his confessor.

"Ibid: The like to Prince Edward.

"Ibid: The like to Queen Margaret."

## III

Inasmuch as special interest attaches to the name and career of Robert Grosseteste, the famous Bishop of Lincoln in the thirteenth century, I venture to set down some facts and principles that are associated with his name in order to reinforce the illustrations of the proposition that I am seeking to establish, viz.:

*That an Ecclesia Anglicana not in conscious dependence upon the Holy See in spirituals is a phenomenon unknown to history before the reign of Henry VIII.*

*Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, A.D. 1235-1253*

In an age of distinguished intellects the name of Robert Grosseteste stands in the front rank; St Thomas Aquinas having died only twenty-one years later, in 1274, and Albert Magnus in 1280. It was said of Grosseteste that to compare him with any of the doctors of his time would be like comparing the sun with the moon.

But whether this be the language of extravagance or not, his versatility was certainly remarkable, inasmuch as to a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew he added a considerable acquaintance with medicine, a love of music and some skill on the harp. His name is generally accounted famous, more particularly on account of a certain attitude which he adopted towards the special abuses of his time. And this is where his policy is of interest to ourselves, inasmuch as his steady

and determined opposition to improper presentations, especially to an appointment to a Canonry at Lincoln which the Pope of his day attempted to enforce, has betrayed some into the conclusion that, because he resisted an appointment that was proposed by the Pope, he therefore repudiated the rule of the Pope as such.

This is a mistake; and, in alluding to the misapprehension, the Anglican editor of his letters, Mr Henry Richard Luard, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge (Rolls Series), says:

“Grosseteste has been styled one of the harbingers of the Reformation. If this means that by his determined endeavours to raise the character of the clergy, the zeal with which he strove against abuses, his unceasing opposition to all improper presentations—from however high a source they originated—his sense of the awful responsibility of his office, his anxiety for the study at Oxford of the Scriptures above all other books, and his efforts to prevent the clergy from usurping functions that would lead them away from their clerical duties, he led the way towards that event, it is certainly true.

“But if it implies that he had any tendency toward the doctrinal changes then brought about in the Church, or that he evidenced any idea of a separation of the Church of England from that of Rome, a more utterly mistaken statement has never been made.

“He was essentially a man of his own time, feeling vividly what were the great causes which were disturbing the Church and lowering the character of both clergy and people; and he eagerly seized and directed

the means which the age offered towards the removal of these causes and the improvement of the condition of the country.”\*

Some eight years before his death he wrote to Henry III, at that time King of England (1245), urging upon him the obedience and fidelity due to the Pope; and this letter elicited a response from the King, of so remarkable and suggestive a kind that I venture to transcribe it *in extenso*:

“My Lord Bishop, what relates to our Crown and royalty we determine to preserve uninjured according to our duty; and our hope is that the Pope and the Church will lend us their aid in this, and you may be assured that always and in all respects we shall show all obedience, fidelity and devotion to the Pope as our spiritual Father, and the Holy Roman Church as our spiritual Mother; to them will we firmly adhere, both in prosperity and adversity; on the day when we do not do this, we consent to lose an eye or lose our head; God forbid that anything separate us from devotion to our spiritual Father and Mother.

“For besides all the reasons which affect us in common with other Christian princes, we are above all others bound to the Church by an especial reason; for just after our Father’s death, while still of tender age, our Kingdom being not only alienated from us, but even in arms against us, our mother, the Roman Church, through the agency of Cardinal Gualo, then legate in England, recovered this Kingdom to be at peace with

\* Preface to Letters, p. xiv.

and subject to us, consecrated and crowned us King, and raised us to the throne of the Kingdom." \*

Now let us pause here and observe how progressive the work of reunion is. Robert Grosseteste has constantly been put forward, in past days, as a standing witness to the supposed fact that the Church in England resented the rule of the Pope in spirituals, as if Henry VIII's subsequent and more drastic action, was a mere carrying out and completion, however clumsy in character, of the same policy. The proposition at the head of our article offers an absolute and point blank contradiction to this view, and one item of evidence in support of this contradiction is what we here have to say about the famous Bishop of Lincoln.

To say that Grosseteste was anxious to support a national Church, independent of the Holy See, in spirituals as well as in temporals, is false. So long as it is put forward in ignorance or as the outcome of inherited prejudice it may perhaps be excused, but in no case can it be tolerated or allowed to pass.

Grosseteste would have spoken somewhat as follows:

"The Church of Rome is, of course, the mother and mistress of all Churches: in all greater spiritual causes an appeal lies to the Holy See; nor can a Bishop be appointed without that See's consent. This is an elementary fact known to all. On the other hand, if the Pope attempts to force a candidate into some benefice, one who is perhaps a foreigner and manifestly unfit for the position, such action must be resisted, not because it emanates from the Pope, but because it is

\* *Letters of Grosseteste*, Preface, pp. xv, xvi.

wrong in itself and therefore an abuse, never mind who attempts to perpetrate it."

It is the old story: the multitude of people make no distinctions. It is easy to confuse the lines in looking back into the past, when, especially in such an age as that of Grosseteste, it can be proved that kings and ecclesiastics as well as nobles and other laymen deeply resented the action of the Holy See from time to time; it is easy to say, "Exactly; the Pope had no rights of any kind whatever in this country or among our people; they knew this, but it was not until the reign of Henry VIII that they succeeded in shaking him off." On the contrary, what every one in England, man, woman and child, knew was that the Holy See possessed the right; and what a few clear-headed and resolute thinkers saw was that he sometimes abused it. It is not enough, then, to say that during the Middle Ages the action of the Holy See was sometimes resented; the further question has to be asked, By whom, and on what grounds?

Was it by the State as such? If so, do not confuse the Church with the State. Or was it by ecclesiastics in England? If so, on what grounds? On the ground that the Holy See had no right to interfere at all, or on the ground that it pushed its legitimate interference beyond its legitimate bounds? This distinction, the distinction between temporals and spirituals, might be illustrated by several letters of Grosseteste. Thus, in one instance, he prays for the help of the Pope against the dean and chapter, who, although they are not exempted by any privilege from his jurisdiction, have thrown every possible obstacle in his way: and he

addresses the Pope as "*Summus Pontifex, Dei Gratia,*" and as being "*in loco Petri, Apostolorum orbisque totius princeps.*"

And on another occasion Grosseteste complains of the delay in sending him two Dominicans, whose presence at his side is due to him as a papal privilege; "*licet id habeamus domini Papæ privilegio et concessione.*"

At the same time, as I have already indicated, he stoutly opposes the presentation of the Pope's nephew, Frederick de Lavagna, to a canonry at Lincoln, not on the ground of his being the Pope's nominee, but because of his "youth and unfitness."

And again, to revert to the legitimate interference of the Holy See, he writes:

"There is therefore nothing that can be truly alleged for the diminution of the episcopal power which the bishop has by the Canon law, who has the same from our lord the Pope, and from Jesus Christ through him, unless our lord the Pope, to whom belongs the plenitude of power, curtail of the episcopal power something which the Canon law grants usually, on account of some gain to the Church known to him, and not to be questioned by others, and which afford large compensation for this curtailment."—*Letters of Grosseteste*, no. 127, Rolls Series.

Thus, the lesson we learn from the life of Grosseteste is what we are coming to recognize as the supreme question of the moment; viz., the distinction between two departments of power, one of which belongs rightly to the Holy See according to the unanimous belief prior to the Reformation, the other to the



State; and furthermore the distinction that has to be carefully observed at all times in a world such as this, viz., the distinction between the legitimate use of power and its abuse.

And it is this which leads us to hope and even confidently to anticipate that the ultimate recovery of Catholic unity, in East and West alike, will be found to turn not upon impossible attempts to unite Canterbury and Constantinople in opposition to the Holy See as such, but upon the willingness of Constantinople and Canterbury alike to acknowledge once again as they both did in the times preceding their schism, and on the testimony of the Œcumenical Councils, the primacy of the Holy See, *de jure divino*. Such, let it be repeated even once again, is the question all the world over at the present moment; the question of jurisdiction, and more particularly the accurate distinction, within that jurisdiction, between temporals and spirituals.

Such is the problem which is being worked out before our eyes in Italy, where it is known as "the Roman Question"; and upon the right solution of this problem depends the settlement of the religious difficulty in England as well as in France.

SPENCER JONES, M.A.





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